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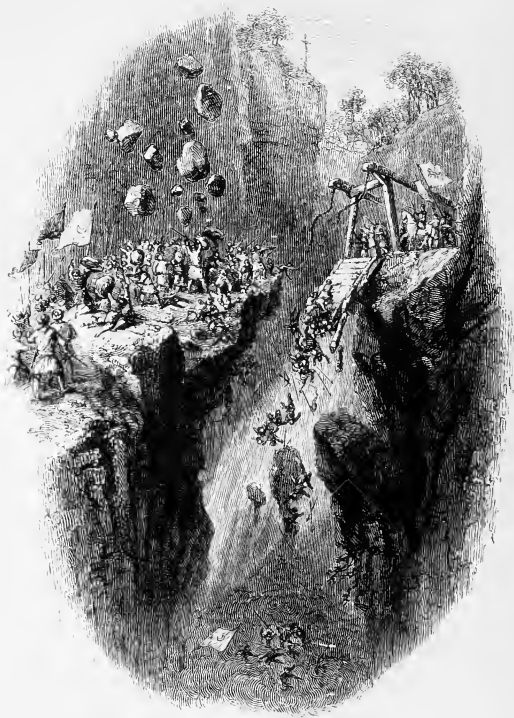
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A shiv'ring, wrenching, ringing crash,—
And downward, downward, headlong dash
Deep in the seething gulf below,
With shrieks and oaths—the impious foe!

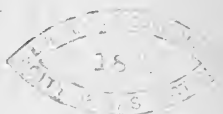
Pelayo:

An Epic of the Olden Moorish Time.

BY

ELIZABETH T. PORTER BEACH.

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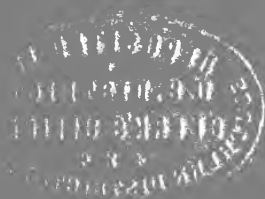
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TO THE BELOVED
WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY,
TO THE BELOVED
STILL REMAINING,
THIS POEM
IS MOST LOVINGLY
Inscribed.





INTRODUCTION.

THE early history of Spain is so involved in doubt, contradiction, and romance, that little is known of its truthful detail; while all considered worthy of gleanings has been so ably handled by writers of acknowledged superiority, as to render it unnecessary, or even presumptuous to bring the subject again before the public, farther than by a brief synopsis of the most important historical events preceding the opening of this epic.

Spain is supposed to have been originally inhabited by the descendants of "Tubal," who were subsequently called "Iberians," the land bearing the name Iberia, probably in honor of some person of distinction. From the earliest ages the country suffered from the invasions of the Celts, Greeks, Phœnicians, and Carthaginians; and, at length, falling into the power of Rome, became, for a short time, a subjugated province. It was during the fifth century that the Goths, then the allies of Rome, after a struggle of three years, succeeded in recovering Iberia, when a new nation arose from the union of the Goths and Iberians,

producing a brave, restless, noble-spirited people, whose power remained unshaken under twenty-five successive kings of pure Gothic blood. The Goths, who were adherents to the "Arian doctrine," after their invasion embraced the faith of the Spaniards, which was the Catholic, in its purest form; the bishop and clergy being most exemplary in their lives, and aiding in every way to promote the influence of the laws and the welfare of the country. Thus all prospered; when, in the year of the Redemption 701, Witiza was elected to the Gothic throne. He was of a cruel nature; and, through anxiety for the security of his crown, becoming jealous of two sons of a preceding king, Favila (Duke of Cantabria), and Theodofredo, he caused the death of the former, and, imprisoning the latter, put out his eyes. Pelayo, son of Favila, being absent, and Roderick and Theodofredo fleeing, happily escaped being murdered. Witiza, soon by his tyranny and licentiousness, obtained the appellation of "Witiza the Wicked."

At length the Pontiff Constantine threatened to depose and excommunicate the king; but Witiza set him at defiance, and appointed his own brother, Orpas, or Oppas, then Archbishop of Seville, to take a seat with Sindaredo, in the episcopal chair of Toledo, making him Primate of Spain. Orpas was a bad man, upholding the king in all his wickedness. While Spain was sinking in vice and licentiousness, Roderick, son of Theodofredo, was gathering about him a host of noble warriors and soldiers, ready to avenge the wrongs of his father and kindred.

With his bold and gallant band advancing unexpectedly upon an enervated and unprepared land, he easily put all to rout, when the whole kingdom submitted to Don Roderick; who, to avenge the cruelty shown his father,

put out the eyes of Witiza, imprisoning him in a castle, where he died, a prey to suffering and remorse. His two sons Ebba, or Evan, and Siseburto, were banished from the country. Orpas, a man of consummate art, succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the king, and retaining his sacred office at Seville; but the see of Toledo was given to the venerable Urbino. With the brilliant reign of Don Roderick, most persons are familiar. Among the first of his noblemen was Count Julian, Lord of Consuegra and Algeziras; his wife, the Countess Frandina, being sister of Witiza and Bishop Orpas. Enjoying the highest dignities, being one of the "espatorias" or "royal sword-bearers," he was also appointed commander of the Spanish possessions on the African coast of the strait, then threatened by the Arabian followers of Mahomet, establishing the seat of government at Ceuta, the frontier bulwark on the Mediterranean, where he bravely held in check the Moslem foe. Before his departure he had confided his beautiful daughter, Florinda, to the care of the king and his queen Exilona, among whose "maids of honor" she was enrolled. The betrayal of this trust by Don Roderick aroused the most agonized, bitter feelings of an outraged father, who, casting all thought of honor, loyalty, and love of country upon one funeral pyre of scathing, consuming revenge for the wrongs received from his sovereign, formed one of the blackest schemes of treason known to history, in which he was aided by his brother-in-law Orpas. Calling together his friends and adherents, he revealed his injuries, and unfolded his plans to dethrone Don Roderick, *falsely* pretending, at the same time, it was his intention to raise one of the sons of Witiza to the throne; proposing they should seek the aid of Muza ben

Nosier, the Arabian emir or general, in Mauritania, for that purpose; while it was his secret determination *to betray his country without reservation to the Moslem*, thus proving himself *doubly traitor*.

The Caliph, with joyful amazement, gladly acceded to the call, when Don Roderick, in the happy security of his power, and Spain in the height of her glory and peaceful bliss, were surprised and inundated by legions of turbaned troops! Don Roderick, falling at the battle of Xeres, a panic ensued, and "Taric el Tuerto," the Arabian general, took possession of the camp. The escaping Christians fled to Auseva, one of the Asturian mountains, where, at the opening of the poem, they are dwelling in caves, awaiting a propitious moment for the recovery of their rights, and the expulsion of the Moors. Don Pelayo, next in line to the throne, having been taken prisoner, was, on account of his known honor and nobleness of character, allowed the freedom of the city of Seville, upon his "parole d'honneur." Previous to which, the story supposes him to have been betrothed to Zillah, daughter of Count Eudon, a powerful lord, who, to save his life and vast possessions, became an apostate and renegade, favoring the suit of Abdelaisis, governor of the country, and son of Muza, for the hand of his already plighted daughter.

For the substance of the two legends, here woven into rhyme, the author is indebted to the kindness of the lamented Washington Irving, who most courteously proffered her the free use of any of his writings that might subserve her purpose.

The poem opens during the sufferings of the Christians, while the Moors are in the height of joyful power.

CHARACTERS.

DON RODERICK, last king of the Visi-Goths, son of Theodofredo.

DON PELAYO, the founder of the Spanish monarchy, son of Favila.

EBBA, son of Witiza.

URBAN, Archbishop of Toledo.

CENTERIO, a venerable Archbishop.

ORPAS, Archbishop of Seville, brother to Witiza and Frandina, a traitor.

COUNT PEDRO,

PELISTES,

THEODMIR,

ATAULPHO,

ROMIRO,

} Noble and brave Spanish knights.

ALPHONSE, son of Count Pedro.

GOMEZ, son of a nobleman, and page to Pelayo.

COUNT JULIAN, a brave Spanish nobleman, turned traitor and apostate, from revenge.

COUNT EUDON, a Spanish nobleman, father of Zillah, an apostate and renegade.

TENDERO, a Spanish renegade.

MUZA BEN NOZIER, the Arabian Emir.

ABDELAISIS, son of the Emir, and Governor of Spain.

TARIC EL TUERTO,* the "one-eyed" Arabian General.

SULEIMAN,

ALCAHMEN,

} Moorish Generals.

TARIC BEN ZEYAD,

MAGUED,

} Moorish Chiefs.

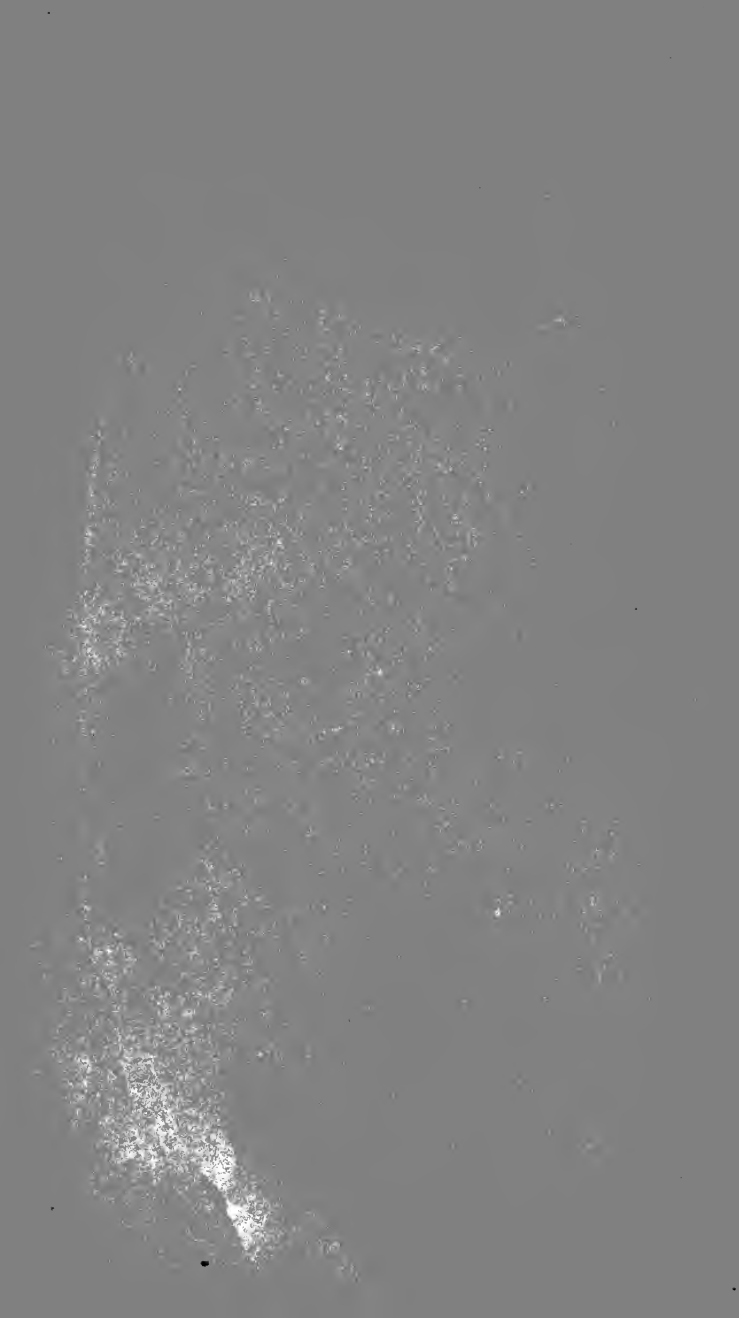
ZILLAH,† daughter of Count Eudon, and betrothed to Pelayo.

INEZ,† lady in waiting to Zillah.

LADY CONSTANCE,† wife of Count Pedro.

* *El Tuerto*, meaning "one-eyed."

† These are fancy names. The historical name of the wife of Pelayo was Gaudiosa.



PROEM.

P R O E M .

WEAVE we now an epic rhyme
Of the olden Moorish time,
When, in Seville's citron bowers,
On perfumed breezes sped the hours,
And love, and song, and roundelay,
And merry dance chased out the day ;
When Moorish blood all proudly coursed,
While Spain's bold hearts grew faint with woe,
'Neath foreign yoke to bend now forced,
Of base invading Moslem foe !

When Julian, the " Traitor Count,"
Had called his minions to the mount
" *La Sierra de Calderin*,"
(The Mount of Treason dark, and sin),
Where, on its rocky summit high,
With heart as hard, and evil eye

(As Lucifer, the son of night
Erst tempted Him of glory bright),
Urged he, in wily, serpent way,
Spain, once so dear, they should betray !
Vengeful, Don Rod'rick to dethrone,—
King Wit'za's son alone to own
In regal honor o'er their race ;—
And still, with treach'rous cunning base,
Plead “ to assist their numbers weak,
Muza ben Nozier's aid they seek,”—
The Arab chief, who joyfully
His troops would lend to treachery.

While Orpas, bishop,—priest of night,
As prince of darkness “ clothed in light,”—
His sacred vesture's purity
Cov'ring deceit and infamy,
Unholy sanction vile did yield,
Trait'rous to prove on battle field !
E'en would himself, near Rod'rick e'er,
Lead to the net they should prepare,
And when in hottest combat siege,
Perfidious, betray his liege !
With army's wing would basely pass
His forces to the impious mass !

While Julian, twice traitor ! planned
Full to betray his native land
To turban'd Moslem horde alone !
Hurling Don Rod'rick from the throne
For selfish end ;—nor cared or thought,
So that he vengeance fully wrought :
For private ill from royal king
To ruin would his country bring !

Amazed ! from Tangier's sea-girt shore,
The Caliph Waled Almanzor
Received the traitor's missive bold
That thus his country basely sold !
O'erjoyed, exclaiming, " God is great !
Mahomet, Prophet, wields our fate ! "
And "*Taric el Tuerto* " * chose
To lead against the Christian foes ;
Who, soon, a hardy Arab troop,
Twelve thousand strong, prepared to swoop,
As birds of prey, o'er stormy Strait
Of Hercules, and frightful wake
Tarifa's shore and Calpe's rock
With "*Techir* " † war-cry's wild'ring shock.

* *Taric*, called by the Arabs "*El Tuerto*" (the one-eyed), he having but one eye.

† "*Alla Akbar*" (God is most mighty), the *Techir* war-cry of the Arabs.

Dark was the night—wild was the way
Where Taric led to battle fray ;
Whose “ Pass,” Theodmir guarded well,
Until his Christian warriors fell ;
Where bravely made he boldest stand
All resolute, with Spanish band,
That “ Pass ” to guard with numbers small,
Save Cross and land, or nobly fall.
But Arab numbers master great,
Forced to retreat Theodmir’s fate ;
While “ *Taric el Tuerto* ” bold,
His standard raised on Calpe’s Hold ;
And “ *Gìbel Taric* ” * gave it name,
In mem’ry of first victory’s fame.

Joined then Theodmir, Ataulpho,
The prince, to meet th’ invading foe,
When Calpe’s summits, dim and gray,
Were bright’ning in the dawn’s first ray ;
Who thus his men inspiring cheered,
As “ *Gìbel Taric’s Hold* ” they neared :
“ Never should we sheathe good sword
While the dark, invading horde,
Infidels accursed ! may stand
To defile our Christian land !

* Now Gibraltar.

Now assail we, firm and bold,
Birds of prey in rugged "Hold."
Rout the vulture, dark-souled flock,
From our own loved mountain rock !
Long the day, our lances keen—
Let not setting sun of e'en
Shine upon one living foe,
Lying not our captive low."

Answered they with shouts his word,
As advancing now they heard
Clash of cymbal, trumpet bray,
From their mountain rock-bound way ;
Glitt'ring bright with helm and spear,
Moslem banners floating near !

On a rock, in bold relief,
Stands the gaunt "Tuero" chief,
Brandishing two-pointed spear,
As his leaders, marching near,
He exhorts the *prince* to slay,
Thus insuring vict'ry's day ;
Crying, "*Chiefs all slain, I wist,
Followers will fade as mist !*"

'Mid the Gothic nobles there,
Prince Ataulpho shone most fair ;

Youthful grace, and majesty,
Crowning dauntless bravery :
Borne on a charger fiercely bold,
Caparisoned in ample fold
Of crimson velvet, 'broidered seen
In brilliant threads of golden sheen.
Wrought in gold his surcoat too,
Velvet, crimson, still in hue.
Waving plumes of snowy white
O'er his burnished helmet bright ;
While ten mounted pages bear
Weapons keen for battle fare.

Bravely charge the Christian band,
Now, the spoilers of their land !
Filled, each Spanish heart, with fire
Of his olden Gothic sire !

Planned the wily Taric well !
Christian leaders sadly fell,
One by one,—while Ataulpho,
Struggling, sees impending woe !
Through the thickest of the fight,
Calling for each bold, good knight ;
But, alas ! few answer gave,
'Mid the dead and dying brave !

With his "handful warrior band"
Vain he seeks to save their land.
Foremost in the Moslem van
Meeteth Julian's partisan,
Tèndero, who leadeth on
Recreant Christians ! honor gone !
Apostates ! renegades ! each son
To Prophet sold ! by Eblis won !

Flashed then Ataulpho's raven eye,
Tendèro, traitor, to espy !
Reared in his father's palace court,
Thus, to the Moslem service bought !
"Well, dost thou, *traitor* !" cried he there,
"Thus to attack, in battle share,
The son of him who gave thee bread !
Thy lord ! now numbered with the dead !
Thou, who betrayest Cross and God !
Thy native soil ! thy country's sod !"

Boldly, then, with upraised lance,
Did Ataulpho brave, advance ;
For his vengeance fierce essayed !
Furious charged the renegade !
But Tendéro, void of fear,
Met the prince in mid-career,

Crushed his lance upon his shield,
Crying, "Yield, Ataulpho, yield!"
When the prince, from saddle-bow,
Grasped his mace, to meet the foe;
And all frightful grew the strife,
Fierce the contest dire, for life!
Yet, ne'er triumphed trait'rous blade,
Treason's curse e'er on it laid!
Paralyzed, the dastard hand
That would turn 'gainst native land!
Vain, Téndero did essay
Renegado sword to play!
But, between his armor's greaves
Ataulpho a stroke receives,
Which returneth he full well!
Crushing helm and skull, it fell!
Armor rattling 'neath the blow,
Bold, that laid Tendèro low.
But, alas! e'en at that hour,
Azreal's raven wing did lower!
O'er the noble Ataulpho,
The death angel's wing of woe!
For, by an Arab javelin hurled,
Transfixed, Ataulpho's charger whirled,
And reeling, fell—in death to lie;
When quick Taric ben Zeyad, nigh,

Spurred on, with scimitar's keen blow
To lay the Prince Ataulpho low !
Whom, sinking, covered with his gore,
His pages to a streamlet bore,
To stanch the wound, and bathe the face
Of that brave prince of royal race,
Who faintly oped his eyes, to say,
"How fares the battle? Whose the day?"
And thus, upon the cold ground there,
Breathed he his last, his dying prayer !
Confessed his sins—no friar near,—
Then to the earth, that soil so dear,
Pressing his lips in fond farewell,
Exhausting, fainting, backward fell,
Sinking beneath death's with'ring blight,
While from its form his soul took flight !
When Arab warriors, rushing by,
Smote off his head !—with triumph's cry
Of "Lo ! the Christian leader's head !"
Which, on a lance, all gory red,
With surcoat of the prince, bore they
To Taric,—and, to trumpet's bray,
And zel and atabal's resound,
Thus marched the battle field around !

With horror dire, and wild affright,
The Christians gazed upon that sight !
Loved features !—surcoat of their lord,—
Thus borne in triumph by the horde !
In vain Theodmir rallied there !
No more of combat would they share ;
But, casting battle weapons by,
By Moors pursued, they wildly fly,
Until the darkness of the night
Frustrated chase, and aided flight ;
When turned to Christian camp the Moor,
Of plunder's spoil abundant, sure.

Ill befits it me to tell
How, on Xeres, Christians fell ;
Tomes elaborate, filled there are
With that bloody battle's fare,
Pinned by hands of able might,
Bards, of inspiration's light,
Telling how the Moslem pour,
Dark'ning fair Quad'lete's shore ;
Where, the land of Xeres through,
Beauteous winds her stream to view ;
How, that battle's dawning day,
When the earth in darkness lay,

Or ere the breaking of the light,
Arrayed Don Rod'rick for the fight ;
Sent for Bishop Urban then,
Holiest of priestly men ;
Laid aside the regal crown,
By the prelate knelt him down,
Sins confessed, was shriven there,
Bowed, uncovered, low in prayer,
Mass and euch'rist to receive,
Ere for combat taking leave.

Now, prepared for battle fray,
He, "*El Cid*,"* doth bear his way,
In the pomp and state all bold
Of the Gothic kings of old,
Grand, in robe of gold brocade,
Sandals diamond wrought, arrayed ;
Wearing crown of jewels rare,
Bearing sceptre, rubied fair ;
Borne in iv'ry chariot white,
Axletrees of silver bright,
Wheels and pole of burnished gold ;
Canopy of golden fold
Rich embossed with precious stone,
That as starry heavens shone ;

* Don Roderick, called by the Arabs "*El Cid*" (the Lord).

Drawn by snowy palfreys white,
Draped in crimson velvet bright ;
Pearls, in rich embroid'ry seen,
Flecking all in fleecy sheen.
A thousand youthful cavaliers
Surround the car,—choice grenadiers,
Of noble blood, a gallant band,
Knighted by Don Rod'rick's hand,
Cased in gilded armor bright,
Helmet-plumes of snowy white,
Surcoats, scarfs of varied hue,
Forming tableau fair to view !

Fadeth soon, alas ! the scene,
Into darkness dire, I ween !
When Orpas, base, turns with his band
Most treach'rous 'gainst his native land.
Then wild confusion, massacre,
And horror's fright attendant were !
When, casting royal mantle far,
Rod'rick descendeth from the car,
And, springing on his fav'rite steed,
Orelia, bravely taketh lead,
With lance and buckler grasped in hand,
To rally his retreating band.

But Arab foes come thick'ning round,
With trusted subjects, traitors found !
'Mid loyal knights, now falling fast,
Was seen the king, brave to the last !
Till Chrysus' * waves, in sad refrain,
His requiem chant in mournful strain !

And Xeres' plain lay red with gore,
Where he, "*El Cid*," had fallen low !
And stained with blood, Guad'lete's shore,
From brave, and royal art'ries flow !
When they, the saved from battle strife,
All hope now o'er,—for freedom, life,
To fair Auseva's bosom fly,
For refuge 'mid her mountains high.

While craven ones to Moslem bend—
Their souls and honor basely lend,
Frail, paltry lucre to retain
In coffers, towers, and lands of Spain !
Twining the badge of sinful shame,
That doth the name of Christ defame,
In turban folds, with Crescent placed,
O'er brows where erst the Cross was traced !

* The ancient name of the Guadalete.

While brave Pelayo, next in line,
Through Favila, to Spanish throne,
'Mid palace courts doth captive pine ;
On "*palabra de honor*" alone
To roam at will through court and tower,
But pris'ner still, in Seville's walls,
'Mid Moorish feast and pomp and power,
Captive in his own princely halls !
Where Muza holdeth royal court,
And Abdelaisis, prince, his son,
As bride, Count Eudon's daughter sought,
Long since by brave Pelayo won ;
Betrothed and pledged by willing sire,
Who now, apostate, sad doth turn,
To shield him from the Moslem ire,—
With infamy his soul to burn !
And fain would force his beauteous child
To list the royal chieftain's love !
Would rend her heart with anguish wild—
Break vows, long registered above !

PELAYO.

PELAYO.

An Epic of the olden Moorish Time.



CANTO I.

ALL bright the orb of day now turns
His glowing course unto the west,
That rich in crimson blushes burns,
As now, within her bosom blest,
He slowly sinks, while evening star
Smiles brightly over hill and glade,
And spreadeth twilight calm, afar
Her dewy veil, in deep'ning shade ;—
When turneth, too, Pelayo bold,
With lover's step, toward myrtle bower,
His maiden pure, fond to enfold,
At balmy eve's sweet trysting hour ;

When, one by one, the stars of night,
As angels' eyes, gleam through the veil
Of heavenly azure, beaming bright
O'er tower and mosque, through grove and
dale.

Twilight is sleeping on the plain,—
Sweetly the bulbul pours its note,
Her "*Ave Maria*" vesper strain,
All gently on the breeze to float :
I marvel that she trills so long !
How fondly deep her tones to-night !
While sings she o'er and o'er her song,
As though inspired by scene so bright !
Art warbling thou for that fair maid,
Who, when the dew-drop kissed the rose,
Erst to thy bower so loving strayed,
At twilight's gentle, balmy close ?
Why lingers she in marble hall ?
While throbs Pelayo's heart with fear,
With rustling breeze to bound or fall,
Sighing, " She cometh not to cheer ! "
How press his lips the flow'rets sweet
His loved one left to wither there !
Why doth his heart so wildly beat ?
Why tarries thus his Zillah fair ?

Bright gleam the lights from tower and hall,
And brighter still from maidens' eyes,
While, light as snowflakes' gentle fall,
Fair feet keep time to melodies.
Now flash Pelayo's dark orbs deep,
As merry strains fall on his ear :
" Why faileth she her tryst to keep ?
Why comes she not my heart to cheer ?
Thou mockest me, O bird of night !
With notes of joy, so blithe and free !
How can ye beam, fair stars so bright,
While she forgets her love and me ?
O Abdelaïsis ! well I trow,
My trusty blade will question thee,
If, in thy pride and power, e'er thou
Dare come between my love and me !
Go, take thy bride from all the fair,
The daughters proud of Spain's rich towers,
Thy wealth, thy pomp, and rank to share,
Seek not *my flower* from these dear bowers !
But hush, my heart ! be quelled, my ire !
List ! list ! a fairy step I hear !
'Mid sound of castanet and lyre,
It draweth lightly, gently near !
The dewy flowers bend in her path,
Shedding their perfumed breathings round ;

Oh ! hushed is now my soul's vain wrath,
With joy alone its pulses bound.
O bird of night, thy note, how sweet !
O stars ! how bright ye shine !
My love ! my Zillah ! now I meet,—
Ay, swarthy Moor, she's mine ! ”

“ Yes, yes, Pelayo ! thine fore'er,
Come weal, come woe to thee or me !
Though ne'er on earth thy home to share,
In brighter realms I'll dwell with thee ! ”

“ What mean thy words ? Why tremblest thou
As aspen quivers to the wind ?
That daring Moor, full well I trow,
Would seek with his thy fate to bind ;
E'en too well sure that even now
Thou'st stolen from his words of love,
To keep last evening's whispered vow,
Breathed here to me, my trembling dove !
And well I ken the foul, black stain
That on thy father rests—O woe !
A renegade to God and Spain !
Would give his daughter to our foe !

“ And though my word is pledged to bide
Within these walls till yon moon's wane,

Captive, on Guadalquiver's side !

A pris'ner in my fallen Spain !

Yet, when her disk once more shall rise

In yonder heavens, an omen bright

To Spain, to us—light of mine eyes !

I'll bear thee hence by her pure light.

For thou wert mine by bond, as word,

Acknowledged mine, by sire and court,

Ere that deep clarion blast was heard,

And craven souls were basely bought !

That *tocsin bell*, that pealing rang

Its deep-toned notes of groaning woe

In quick, successive, frightful clang

Wild call to meet the rushing foe !

That Moorish blast of death and woe

That hurled destruction in its breath,

As sweeps the fierce '*Siroc*,' all low,

Before its path in horrid death !

“ Ah ! worse than Simoon's roar, the note,

That roused our happy, slumb'ring Spain,

And raised the Crescent flag to float

In triumph o'er Don Rod'rick slain !

Fierce, madly rushed that swarthy throng,

With one wild swoop, as birds of prey—

That turban'd host, 'mid clash of gong,
And scimitars' bright flashing ray !
When fell that noble cavalier,
Ramiro, 'mid the Christian dead,
And royal standard—omen drear !
Lay spreading 'neath vile Moslem tread !
Its burnished staff sad rent in twain,
That proudly bore our arms of Spain !
Low, fallen on the battle field !
Prophetic that *we* soon must yield !

“ With sickly glare the sun arose
Morns eight, upon Quad'lete's shore,
O'er Xeres' plain, dark with our foes,
And welt'ring in her children's gore ;
And evenings eight, set dark that sun,
O'er bravely struggling Christians there,
Whose pure heart's blood, all freely run
As Holocaust in country's share !
Until the regal arm was felled,
Until Don Rod'rick's hand was cold !
And royal blood from heart-fount welled,
And ceased the dauntless war-strokes bold !
When, lowly on his mother earth,
That kingly form was lain,

Where passed unto his 'second birth'
Don Rod'rick 'mid the slain!
In 'royal robe, and hornéd helm,'
And bright enamelled mail;
When dark despair did all o'erwhelm!
With horror each heart quail!
Then fainted, strongest, bravest heart!
Then Hope, herself, took wing!
Dismay, confusion, bearing part!
Fall'n! fall'n! Rod'rick! king!

"And poor *Orelia*,* riderless,
And wild Moors rushing on
As beasts of prey, all merciless,
With yell and '*Techir*' song!
While Spain's brave blood poured gushing o'er,
As wine from out the vintner's press,
Her vineyards, '*patios*,'† all gore!
As though no God to save or bless.

"O fatal day! O morn of woe!
No marvel that our Cross fell low!
God's blessed day, so desecrate!
Palm Sunday! stained with crimson date!

* Roderick's war horse.

† Courts.

O bloody field of Chrysus' shore !

‘ *Campo de la Verdad!* ’*

Fitter, ‘ *El Campo del Dolor!* ’†

Dark Hades' gory path !

“ And countless hosts of Arab power

Swarmed on, with Moslem foes,

And minaret, and crescent tower,

And golden mosque arose

’Mid convent groves, and Christian dell,

And heath-clad hill and plain,

Where cross and altar sadly fell,

And sacred walls of Spain !

But better far that ev’ry vein

Of Spain’s best blood, all pure and brave,

Should bathe, as tears, her noble slain,

Than recreant turn, base life to save !

“ Nay, pardon thou, my soul ! my love !

I would not wound thy gentle heart,

My noble one ! my purest dove !

That of thy *father* hath no part.

In my wild grief I thoughtless spake,

Of one who calls thee child, I know,

* The field of truth.

† The field of woe.

Who would from me my soul's light take,
And finish well his work of woe!

“ Said I there seemed no God to save
Our fallen Spain, forevermore?
If living, there remain *ten* brave
Of those left welt'ring in their gore,
God will not long avert his face
From our dear country's bleeding woes;
Once more shall rise our fallen race,
Scattered shall be our cruel foes,
This faithful arm shall strike one blow
With valiant knights, our land to free;—
Spain, desolate, and now laid low,
Thy banner, proud shall wave o'er thee!

“ But first, my nightingale! my bird!
Must wing her flight with me away;—
Here soon again her notes be heard,
When victory shall crown our day!
In Seville's halls and bowers, with me,
My bride! my queen of heart and throne!
O Spain! I fight for her and thee—
'Twere sad to strive for thee alone;
My heart would faint, were no bright hope
To light me on my darkened way,

No gentle tones my soul awoke—
No eye beamed on me loving ray.

“ Why droops my trembling bird her wings ?
Nay, raise those tearful eyes above,
For bright with hope my soul now sings,
For ‘ *vengeance, victory,*’ and love !
As yonder orb from out that cloud
Is glimm’ring now, in misty light,
To burst in full effulgence proud,
So shall our Spain break from her night !
Lo ! as she now reigns calm, serene,
And purely bright, in yon clear sky,
So dost thou reign, my bosom’s queen,
And Spain’s shall reign, with banner high !
And as those stars gleam o’er her brow,
Steadfast and faithful in their ray,
So shine our loyal, brave hearts now,—
The few saved from that carnage day ! ”

Fondly her violet orbs she turned
On him, all dewy bright with tears ;
While in their depth a lustre burned
Of love and faith, of hopes and fears.
“ Ah ! yes, I’ll raise mine eyes to *thee*,
Light of my soul ! mine own true knight !



As yonder orb from out that cloud
Is glimm'ring now, in misty light,
To burst in full effulgence proud,
So shall our Spain break from her night !

They need no 'star' or 'moon' to see ;
 Thy presence maketh all things bright !
My cynosure to guide in love !
 My firm, unwav'ring beacon bright !
To cheer on earth, and lead above,
 Till blend our souls in heav'nly light !
But ah ! my heart grows faint with fear,
 Lest from me severed, thou shouldst be,
My love ! my light ! in night most drear
 Borne down in battle's raging sea !
Nor could this earthly, frail bark breast
 Alone and desolate life's tide ;
Better thy bird should seek her nest
 Safe, glad, with thee on mountain side,
Or e'er its helm another take,
 E'en though alone, on stormy sea ;
The bark must sink—this poor heart break,
 Ere guide or love it know but thee !
Crave I no throne, or courtly train,
 No crown upon my brow to shine,
Pray I but freedom for our Spain,
 One faithful heart—thine, dearest, thine !
Alas ! how wild, how vain that hope
 For Spain ! her glory now so shorn !
In bondage base, 'neath foreign yoke !
 From night so dark, whence cometh morn !

Where now thy noble, stalwart band ?

Where our bold chiefs—brave sons of Spain ?
All crushed and scattered o'er her land !

Or martyred, mould'ring with her slain !
Fall'n Cross and sceptre, chief and king !

Nay, rush not madly to thy grave !
As cygnet fair, thy dirge to sing
In reckless war cry, Spain to save ! ”

Fondly he gazed, with love-lit eye,

Within her earnest orbs of blue ;
As starry rays from heaven lie
In crystal waters, mirrored true.

“ And if, as cygnet bird, I sing
My requiem in our battle cry,
Her parting song doth sweetest ring,
As mine would, love ! for Spain to die.
But fear thou not, my life ! my love !

No swan-like dirge sing I forlorn,
But, as the lark chants dawn above,
So herald I our breaking morn !

“ Now rest that dear face close to me,
Thy golden tresses next my cheek,
While in thine ear I breathe to thee
A dream of hope I may not speak.

Thou dost remember my young page,
Gomez, that stripling of sixteen,
Who, constant, through the battle's rage,
Close by my side was ever seen ?
Dauntless and fearless in the fight,
As bound his liege and Spain to save !
In sooth, it was a goodly sight,
That noble boy, so young and brave !
But, when the fray grew madd'ning wild,
And fiercely rushed the dark horde on,
Borne with them was that faithful child ;
I turned—to find him from me gone !
And how, I need not tell to thee,
My heart for him has sorely bled,
Whom ne'er I thought again to see,
But sadly numbered with the dead !

“Thy precious form last eve had passed
Scarce fifteen moments from my view,
And I had turned me from my last
Fond gaze, and sad, oh ! sad adieu !
When passing near the ilex trees
That grace the borders of yon bower,
Heard I a rustling, as the breeze,
And at my feet there dropped a flower,

As, parting the rich vines so bright,
All drooped their crimson buds with dew,
A voice exclaimed, "My liege! my knight!"
And Gomez! living! met my view!
Bending with rapt'rous rev'rence deep,
Mine hands with kisses wild he prest,
Exclaiming, 'God my liege did keep!
Oh! be His name forever blest!'

"Then hastily his tale he told
Of one, who through that battle day,
Constant on me kept eye o'er bold,
And eager, sought full oft to slay.
'Twas Ebba! who, with direst hate,
Strove, ever fierce, to wind my fate
In speedy death,—heart's blood to spill,
And thus his hopes and vengeance fill.
Through all the hottest of the fight,
That Evil-eye my form e'er sought,
Gleaming with murd'rous intent bright,
With envy, malice, deeply fraught,
And baffled rage,—for well he knew
No treach'rous blow could reach my heart,
While that brave boy, so fondly true,
Close from my side would never part;

And, therefore, thought he first to slay
My faithful guard ; so dastard sword
Aimed full at me,—but turned, to lay
That noble boy low with the horde !

“ Weak, faint, he rose, with strongest will
To serve his master to the last,
When rushing foe, with ‘ *Techir* ’ shrill,
Bore his poor, fainting body past.
Bleeding and senseless on the field,
With all that wretched, dying throng,
Fell that poor child,—my guard and shield,
As rushing Moors swept wild along !
At midnight hour, ’mid hope and fear,
One of his kin, who searched a friend,
Chanced my poor Gomez’ moan to hear,
To save him from untimely end,
And bore him to a mountain cave,
Where brave and fair were gath’ring fast,
While others sought the field, to save
Their dying, ere all hope were past.
And thus a goodly band was spared,
Of Spain’s brave, fallen, bleeding race ;
By leech’s skill all gently cared,
To fill again the warrior’s place.

Assembled there, in cave and glen,
And o'er the verdant mountain slope,
Wait Spain's fair daughters—loyal men—
Brave hearts, all warm and bright with hope;
Eager upon the foe to rush—
To raise our battle cry again,
The miscreant Saracen to crush
For '*Vengeance! Victory! and Spain!*'
But now, my love! to me they turn,
Last of my sad and princely race!
Each heart with fervent zeal doth burn,
That as their chief I take my place;
To lead them on, as chief and king,
From vale and mountain call they now,
That soon each dale and height may ring
With one avengeful, patriot vow.

“Learned they, I dwelt in bondage here,
When, as a peasant, Gomez came
To seek me out, with words of cheer,
Of quick release from captive shame.
Him send they, saying, one and all,
‘Go now unto Abd'lais's court,
Where seek Pelayo, held in thrall,
With whom on Xeres' field we fought.

Tell him, his people, unsubdued,
His Christian chiefs, all faithful stand,
That time sufficient hath ensued,
Since Xeres' fall, and wait the band ;
That he, as king, shall lead them on ;—
In Theodmir's, Urbino's name,
In name of chiefs to glory gone,
We pray him, save our country's fame !'
And loud the cry, ' Save thou our Spain !
Pelayo ! now our only hope !
Let us not call or plead in vain !
Pelayo ! break our hated yoke !
Too long we pining, fettered groan !
Restore, in thine own rightful line,
The Spanish sceptre—mount thy throne,
And raise our Cross, and Virgin shrine !'

“ And now, my life ! the hour draws nigh
When, to Asturia's mountains high,
We haste, just Heaven's will to do ;
For risen bright the fire anew,
So nearly dead ;—from embers past
One spark, not yet extinct, the last,
Breathed on by souls that brook no shame,
Hath kindled into glorious flame,

To sweep th' invader from our path
As leaves before the tempest's wrath ;
And raise a beacon-light on high
With '*Santiago!*' battle cry !
Then ne'er may it be said that I,
Recr'ant from death or duty, fly,
And thou wilt be my star of light,
Sweet love ! to cheer to freedom bright ;—
To freedom blest, on mountain height,
 To fair Auseva's heav'nly air,
Far from that Crescent's hateful sight,
 With me, my precious one ! I'll bear, * *
Nay, list ! Bishop Centerio, sweet !
 With friends and maidens, dear to both,
Await us there, with love to greet,
 And witness all, our nuptial troth :
And there, in *God's* cathedral grand,
 Lighted by myriad stars on high,
Guarded by angels pure, we'll stand,
 Our canopy, the glorious sky.
Its columns, oaks, in moonlit sheen,
 Fluted by many a beauteous vine ;
Our carpet, flowers on mossy green,
 And there, my life ! I'll make thee mine !
The holy bishop waits us there,
 To join our hands, as hearts, in one,

Ere all shall join in one vast prayer
That God will bless the work begun,
For Cross and Faith—for fallen Spain,
And vow to fight, and bleeding fall,
So that her banner float again
O'er battlement, and tower, and wall!

“Light of my soul! wilt fly with me,
Far from thy gorgeous palace home,
Content in forest-wild to be,
Or with thine own true knight to roam?
Oh! gently will I guard my dove,
And though in wild-wood be her nest,
I'll weave it close with flowers of love,
Forever blooming in my breast!
And thou shalt say, in after power,
That marble court and golden dome,
Are not so dear as bird and flower,
And streamlet of our mountain home!”

“*Wilt fly with thee!* And wouldst thou ask
Yon bird, in gilded cage so fine,
If it in Freedom's light would bask
With loving mate, or fettered pine?
To be each day more eager sought
To nestle in a tyrant breast,

Until at length, fierce, rudely caught,
And forced, e'en dying, there to rest !
Nay ! nay ! thou couldst not leave me here
To be the bride of Moslem-foe !
And I but shrank in maiden fear,
Lest wrong, ere wedded, hence to go.
But ever noble, true, and right,
My guide ! my light ! in all thou art !
With trusting love I'll share thy flight,
And from thee, never, never part !

“ Ha ! see ! my Sainted Mother dear !
In spirit pure ! an angel mild !
Smiles sweetly, as she draweth near !
She blesses us ! blesses her child !
Now sadly turns she toward our Hall,
Where floats that brazen, impious scroll,
Proclaiming my lost father's fall !
Plead ! mother ! plead for his poor soul !
Look ! tear-drops swell in those dear eyes !
All mournfully she droops her head,—
Now smiles on us ! and toward yon skies
Floats gently on, by angels led !
Bless me again ! O mother, stay !
Smile yet once more ! and bless thy child !

Bear her, oh, bear her not away !

In mercy stay ! nor drive me wild ! ”

To heaven, outstretched her arms she threw,

Piercing its depths with earnest gaze !

Raised, poised, as if for flight—she too

Seems angel fair, in moonlit rays !

As halo floats her sunny hair,

Of heaven’s own blue, soul-fraught her eyes,

Fixed on that mother, till through air

She slowly fadeth in those skies !

Then, as a lily, dew-drooped, weak,

All sobbing on his breast she fell,

Who fondly, soothing words did speak,

Till vanished grief ’neath love’s sweet spell !

And smiling she, as blossom bright

In sun’s reviving, cheering ray,

Deems her blest mother, ‘ clothed in light,’

Came—omen of a happier day !

“ My precious love ! this waning moon

Absolves me full from ‘ word or bond,’

So must we hence, and that right soon,

To join our friends, the brave and fond.

When ev’ning dews the third shall fall,

Thou’lt meet me ’neath’ the acacia fair,

At sunset hour, when from yon wall
Rings forth the Moslem cry, 'To prayer !'
When prostrate falls each turbaned knave,
And cry to '*Allah*' that dark mass,
We, praying *God* to bless and save,
Will from those walls to freedom pass !
When from the minaret's high wall,
Her outer gallery, doth fall
The *Muezzin*'s last '*Alla Hu*,'*
Our forms no more the guard may view !
As *peasants*, home from market trade,
In humble guise, on good mules strong,
Ourselves, Gomez, thy faithful maid,
Will careless wend our way along ;
And once without the farther wall
With thee, my precious life ! my fair !
That slave may scarce on '*Allah*' call,
Whom our sure flight to stop might dare.
Gomez will bring the garbs for all,
Which don we o'er our vestures here ;
And in our panniers, wardrobe small,
Will full suffice for rural gear.
Let Inez bring by stealth, at times,
Thy treasures and thy robes, my bride !

"*Alla Hu*" ("God, the Prophet"), the concluding words of the *Muezzin*'s call to prayer.

As thou dost wish, and near the limes,
 Beneath the myrtle, closely hide."
But they must part—yon silv'ry moon
 Is setting now—fading her light ;
The sad " adieu " comes all too soon—
 To lovers fond, the sad " good night ! "

" Again ' good night, ' mine angel love !
 Whom sainted spirits bright attend,
And guarding, shield my precious dove
 For me, through life, life without end ! "
Again, again, one last embrace !
 As rending heartstrings thus to sever !
" Once more our tryst in this dear place,
 Again to part, sweet love ! oh, never ! "
Fluttered her white robes in the breeze,
 Fades she, as angel, from his sight !—
Now moans the wind through orange trees,
 And, as yon moon, waneth *his* light !

CANTO II.

THREE weary days had well nigh passed,
And sunset hour came stealing near,
When Zillah turned to take her last,
Sad, fond farewell of scenes once dear.
Brushing the tear that dimmed her eye,
For shadowed joys and past hopes, fled,
Bright flowers, that blossomed but to die,
All sadly stricken—withered—dead !
“ No place for thee,” she mournful sighed,
“ Ill seemeth tear or sign of woe ;
A loved and royal chieftain’s bride,
While he is spared, may grief ne’er know.”

But scarce that tear to fall had time,
Ere joy beamed forth ! in myrtle bower,
Beneath the acacia fair, and lime,
Her lover waits th’ appointed hour !

One bound, one spring, and he hath pressed
That trembling maiden to his heart !
“Star of my soul ! my bride ! my blessed !
Mine own for aye ! no more to part !”

And Inez now and Gomez bend,
In rustic garb, and rev'rence deep,
With earnest zeal and care to tend,
And faithful guard still anxious keep ;
While quickly armor's shining mail,
And snowy robe of finest make,
In peasant guise they closely veil,
And each on arm a basket take.
But scarce an arrow's distant flight,
By Guadalquiver's rippling side,
In grove of fig, well screened from sight,
Their sturdy mules had Gomez tied,
Which mounting, they with hearts of fear
Went forth amid the noisy throng,
From bower, and “*patio*,”* long loved, dear,
With careless air, and light-hummed song.

And the Alcàzar leave full soon,
Her curling pennons, crescent moon,

* Court.

And impious scrolls of blasphemy,
Floating where sacred cross should be,
O'er Christian gardens,—grand arcade,
Of fluted columns' length'ning shade,
As sinks the sun in glowing west,
With glancing beam o'er courts to rest,
Of olive and sweet orange flower,
Radiant in sunset's gorgeous hour.

And thus, with anxious, trembling fear,
They meet the turbaned, Eastern throng ;
Giralda's tower soon passing near,
Mosque, convent, aqueduct along ;
And, as beneath the *palm* they passed,
The brazen statue, beareth there,
Murmured Pelayo, " Thus, at last,
May *we* return with palm branch fair ! "

Now, Convent of the Carmelite,
Embowered 'mid chestnuts' richest bloom,
Beyond their Guadalquiver bright,
Behold they, in deserted gloom.
No cross upraised toward heaven's light,
No sacred emblem meets the sight !
With flutt'ring heart they rapid pass
'Mid Arab, Moor, and motley mass,





When soon, with joy the city gate
They safely reach, ere ceases call
Of "Alla Hu!" to Prophet great,
And praising *God*, pass from the wall!

While clear doth ring through perfumed air,
The Imaums' cry, "*To prayer! to prayer!*"
When soon, with joy the city gate
They safely reach, ere ceases call
Of "*Alla Hu!*" to "Prophet great,"
And praising *God*, pass from the wall!

"Now, God be praised!" exclaimed the knight,
"For this sweet breath of freedom's air,
With thee, my star of beauty bright,
And queen of every virtue rare!
My wild flower of the forest! now
Thou bloomest in thy rustic dress,
More fair to me than when all bow
To thee in courtly loveliness!
'*Mimosa mia!*' trembling thou?
This little hand scarce guides thy rein!
'*Animo, vida mia!*' now,
For fear and terror, love! are vain.
Turn thee, my life! behold yon wall,
Where Moslem banners glisten bright;
E'en now, thou seest, we're far from all,
And soon will fade their hateful sight."

"It is, my love! no craven fear
Thrills deep my heart, unnerves my hand;

But terror, that thy life, so dear,
Be thus exposed to Moorish band !
Lest that our flight o'er soon be known,—
Captured by numbers, sadly sure !
To thee, my life ! no mercy shown !
And I—forced bride of that vile Moor ! ”

“ Cheer thee, ‘ *Mi Alma !* ’ banish fear,—
For not until the nightingale
Breathes forth her love-strains, sweetly clear,
Within our own dear parted vale,
Will Abdelaïsis seek thy side,
To learn my bird has ta'en her flight !
Near vulture dark no more to bide,
Or *patios*, seared by Moslem blight.
When, thanks to Heav'n, the distance wide
'Tween thee and him, mine own ! my bride !
And e'en pursued, full well, I ween,
Long leagues and night will kindly screen
Us from all ken, or sight of Moor,
And soon, all safe in refuge sure
Within Auseva's shelt'ring arm,
Where ne'er may aught affright, or harm
My dove, enclosed in safest nest
Of eyrie bright, on loving breast ! ”

“ Now on my heart doth radiance break !
Safe, safe with thee ! thine, only thine !
My noble oak ! storm ne’er may shake,
And I, thy weak but clinging vine.
And thus all fear I cast aside,
Thy loving, true, and trusting bride :
More blithe my nest, on mountain height,
With thee, mine own ! ’neath heaven’s light,
Than Alcazàr whose walls of gold,
Would but a pining birdling hold ;
Beating her wings ’gainst rubied bar,
Moaning for freedom, love, afar,
Dying, beneath the with’ring breath
Of loathed love—far worse than death ! ”
And thus, in converse fond, they led
Their loving, onward way,
And many a league had rapid sped,
Long ere the close of day.

Happily they onward wend,
Smiling skies above them bend,
Hope, her radiance lends, to cheer,
Chasing ev’ry darksome fear.
Rich and lovely is the scene !
Soft’ning now in shades of e’en,

Far ascending mountains high,
Looming toward the glowing sky ;
Scattered hamlets, villas bright,
Calm repose in rosy light.
Castles grand, imposing tower
Lofty, where broad shadows lower,
Marking clear each rampart line
Bolder in the sun's decline.

Thus far, they had avoided well
Hamlet, or cot, or haunt of men ;
But now, as winding through a dell
Of sweet repose in mountain glen,
The faint, low, tolling of a bell
With blending voices, meet the ear !
How solemn, sad, that dirge's swell,
As yon small fun'ral train draws near !

Oh blessed sight ! no crescent stains
Where priests, with crucifix and pall,
Pay their last rev'rence to remains
Now passing to the home of all.
While from a grove, 'mid chestnuts' flower,
There glistens in the sunset light
Our cross of hope, on convent tower !—
A hermitage, oasis bright !

“ Did I not tell thee, precious one !

That, o’er each height and mountain glen,
Wait, but to know our work begun,

To fight, and save, brave, loyal men,
Who, faithful to their cross and land

(As powder in the vein doth lie),
All calmly ready, waiting stand

To strike for Spain, or nobly die ? ”
But list, the solemn words they sing
Of him, from earth now passed away,—
Conquered by one whom all own king,
In bitter sadness, day by day !

Hark ! to yon convent bell,
Heavily it tolleth ;
List ! to the requiem swell,
Mournfully it rolleth.

Loved one ! thou’rt passing now
From earth to Heaven—
Sadly, the mourning bow—
Hearts, heavy ! leaden !

Raise now the cross above,—
Jesus, the Saviour !
Smile on us, Lord, in love !
Pray for us, Madre !

Slow sets the sinking sun,
Skies brightly beaming ;
Mortal, thy work is done !
Death,—harvest gleaning.

Leavest thou, as golden cloud,
Footprints, brightly gleaming ;
Thus casting earthly shroud—
Passing from vain dreaming.

“ Alas ! too true ! vain, idle dreams—
All pomp, and wealth, and power below !
And pleasure’s ray but fitful gleams,—
And glory—but an empty show !
But yesterday, how bright our land,
In every blessing, richly proud !
Now governed by a foreign band,
And ’neath an impious yoke, how bowed !
To-day, man calm in peace may rest,
To-morrow, wretched, homeless left !
To-day, in happy love full blest,—
To-morrow, of that joy bereft ! ”

“ Nay, not bereft ! ” she answered sweet,
“ True love fades not, dies not,—oh, never !
Death could but part us, love ! to meet
In Heaven, more bright, to dwell forever.”

“ My star of hope ! mine angel love !

My bride on earth, in Heav’n fore’er !

And earth scarce less than Heav’n above,

While thou my home or wand’rings share.

But, dear one ! thou must rest thee here,

In this all holy, calm retreat ;

For yet full many a league, I fear,

Ere aught like this again we meet.

But see ! who hasten quickly near,

With eager step, as us to greet !

Bishop Centerio ! maidens dear !

Chiefs, nobles of our court we meet !

Kind friends, who wend their loving speed

From far, to welcome us this night ;

Our escort hence o’er hill and mead

To forest altar—nuptial rite.

For well, methinks, my gentle one

Might shrink to meet a warrior band,

With our small number first alone,

Friends many, love, will round thee stand ;

And were it not, mayhap, e’en now

Pursued, discovered in our flight,

We’d tarry here for marriage vow,

Our hands, as hearts, in love to plight.”

Scarce had she time to turn one glance
Of grateful love, for tender thought,
When nearer now those friends advance
With words of ardent welcome fraught.
“Bless thee!” the bishop cried, “my child!
God bless thee, prince, our hope, the last!—
How, daughter, like thy mother mild!
Whose days on earth full quickly passed!
So, God ordaineth all for best,
Some wise, mysterious, unseen good,
To try our love, our faith to test,—
He chastens now with bitter food!
And teaches us, in brightest days
To guard the treasures we possess,
And prize the smallest sunny rays
Which our poor earthly life may bless.”

Now crowd brave chiefs and nobles round
Their prince, Pelayo, happ'ly found!
Exclaiming, “God, our Lord, we praise!
Who thus, through thee, Spain's king doth raise.
Most royal prince! we greet thee, all
Our hope now, in our country's fall;
Welcome, brave chief! from fond hearts true,
Prince! king! to raise our Spain anew!”

Tender and fond the greeting, too,
Between those maiden friends of old,
Who meet in scenes so strangely new,
In this calm glen, 'mid mountains bold !
For long, these friends had holden all
Afar in mountain wilds their court ;
In caves, where pure streams rippling fall,
'Mid towers of boulders, strongly wrought ;
Thither had fled, when hope was past,
To bide until a fairer hour,
When Spain should ring her trumpet-blast,
And boldly reassert her power.

Within the monastery's wall
They enter now, brief rest to take ;
When speedily sounds kindly call
Frugal collation all to make.
And there, on holy friars' board,
Bright flowers, rich fruits were freely spread,
With choicest wines, long since well stored,
Fresh game, and whitest chestnut bread.
And now, those maidens murmur low
Of much that's past, and bridal near ;
When, playfully, each seeks to know
Who are the chosen bride-maids dear ?

While half in joy, and half in fear,
Fair Zillah, trembling, smiling, tries
Brave heart to bear, for him so dear,
Toward whom she turneth loving eyes ;
And though in parlance grave is he
With warriors of their suff'ring land,
He feels that glance—and turns to see,
As though 'twere touch of gentle hand.
Magnetic thrill ! that, stealing sweet,
Soul to fond soul may loving send,
In one vibration full to meet,
In one soul-rapture both to blend !

But they must hasten,—in yon court
The restless chargers stamp the ground,
Champing the bit with neigh and snort,
That through the valley shrill resound ;
While faithful mules still meekly stand,
As if for toil and patience made ;
So, in all things, from wisest hand,
For every use, come light and shade.

Soon forth approach our prince and maid,
From sacred porch, each fair and knight ;—
The royal pair again arrayed
In proper robe,—in armor bright ;

And mounted they on steeds of white,
Was ever seen more noble pair ?
With ev'ry grace and virtue bright,
A godlike hero ! angel fair !

And Gomez, proudly, in advance,
His chieftain's spear and banner bears ;
While shield, and sword, and shining lance,
Each knight and warrior boldly wears.

Then bend they low, in rev'rence all,
Before those friars, old and grave,
Whose benedictions solemn fall,
With prayers that God will guide and save ;
As turning from that spot so blest,
The twilight dews begin to steal,
While crimson clouds adorn the west,
And sweetly chimes the vesper peal.

PRAYER OF THE FRIARS.

"Domine, exaudi me,"
Jesu, Saviour mine !
Lo, now Thy children see,
Suppliants at Thy shrine.

Lord ! Jehovah holy !
Lend now Thine ear,—
Bend we, sad and lowly,
Dangers low'ring near !

Save Thou, from sin and woe,
Lighten Thou, our sorrow ;
Shield us from Moslem foe,
Hasten brighter morrow.

Pray thou for us, Marie,
Virgin madre mine ;
Intercede for mercy
From the Lord divine.

“ *Ora pro nobis,*”
O madre, madre mine !
“ *Ora pro nobis,*”
That Heaven's blessings shine

On homeless wand'ers here,
Toss'd and tempest driven ;
Life's treach'rous sea, all drear !
From our haven riven !

“ *Ora pro nobis,*”

Pardoned be our sin,
O'er foe of earth and soul
Vict'ry may we win;
Guide Thou unto the goal—
Heaven safe within!

With grave and solemn thoughts imbued,
And measured, gentle pace, they passed;
The hour, the scene, their tones subdued,
As faint and fainter fell the last
Sad, plaintive strain of holy prayer—
So thrilling in its dying close,
That, as inspired—in chorus share
Spontaneous each voice arose
In rich, full tones—deep from the heart
Gushed forth again that fading prayer,
Each hill and valley bearing part
In softened echoes through the air;
While twilight falls, on hill and dale,
As clouds of eve o'erhang the west,
Draping, with floating, gorgeous veil
The portals whence the day seeks rest.
Till fades the light from that fair west,
And stars come glimm'ring forth on high;

Sweet nature, hushed in dewy rest,
As calm reposing all things lie ;
While Night slow folds her dusky wings,
And silence reigns o'er hill and plain,
Save but the lay the nightbird sings,
In clear and melancholy strain,
Of gently trilling, plaintive note ;
Sweet warbler of the dreaming wild !
Whose mellow tones so liquid float
The livelong night in cadence mild.

Enamored is she of yon moon,
That riseth now, serenely bright ?
Others, I ween, rejoice, thus soon
She smileth on *their* way to light
Their mountain path, and heath, and plain,
Where solitude and silence reign
Sole dwellers now, and e'en by day
Where foot of man doth seldom stray.
Falls through the forest dense, her glance,
In quaint, strange forms, her cheering ray,
'Mid oaks whose waving branches dance,
And with the mountain breezes play.
Ofttimes their path in darkness quite,
Save startled fireflies' myriad gleam,

Or their own torches' fitful light
Of strangely wild and flick'ring beam.

Again, along the river's side,
Ana and Sella's course, they wend,
Whose gentle waters ripp'ling glide,
While moonbeams in their bosom blend.
Their borders fringed with drooping vine,
Of fruit, and flowers, green, crimson, decked,
As em'rald, ruby, bright to shine,
In silv'ry sheen, all richly flecked!
Their way, sweet strewn with dewy flowers,
O'er-arched by wild, fantastic bowers
Of lofty branches waving high
In tow'ring pride toward starry sky;
Where rest secure the forest choir,
Till dawning waketh matin lyre,
Filling the air with melody,
As sweetest, rarest minstrelsy.

How strange that cortége in the wild!
How fair that noble pair, so true!
As in his loving gaze she smiled,
Her face upraised to moonlight view!
Her tiny hand he fondly holds,
Still gently guides her palfrey's tread,

With tender arm her form enfolds,
While bends to her his noble head.
And thus, full many a rapid mile,
In hasty flight they quickly sped,
Sweet Love and Hope bright to beguile,
As happily their journey led.

Now turn they from all haunts of men
Toward "*Barranco de Tocas*" glen,
Where Deva's stream doth brightly wind,
With silv'ry birch and hazel lined.
Leaving the harvest fields spread wide
Of golden grain, for mountain side ;
High, rocky cliffs of heath and gorse,
That gayly deck tortuous course ;
Till wilder, grander grows their way,
Where toppling crags above them lay ;
And closer still, the rude defile,
Through boulders fiercely flinty pile ;
Nought heard, save Deva's rushing sound,
Or chargers' tramps re-echoing round,
Startling the eagle from his rest,
And forest bird from sheltered nest.

Lo ! rises yon, St. Mary's cave,
That Deva's rills, fair, sparkling lave ;

As Covadonga's temple old,
Towering in lofty grandeur bold !
Where Christian watchmen ever stand
To guard Asturia's mountain band.
Nor mortal, e'er through this abyss
May warder stealthy pass, I wis !
But look ! up yonder mountain, bright
Gleam torches, fires, in cheerful glow !
How fearful looms that dizzy height
To wand'ers at its base below !

“ Behold, my liege ! ” exclaims a knight,
(Count Pedro), “ our Auseva bold !
That foe lives not, could force her height,
Or access gain within her fold !
On her bright summit breathe we free,
Deep inspiration from on high,
Health, peace, religious liberty,
Fearing no foe, or danger nigh.
Calm sanctu'ry for royal flight !
Where snowy clouds bend gently down,
Kissing her brow of grandeur bright,
With fleecy halo—heavenly crown !
And there the eye's extended range
Unbounded o'er each side may roam

O'er scenes of richly varied change,
Hill, river, vale, and vine-clad home.
Studded her slopes with many a cave
Of ev'ry size, and shape, and height,
Where artist, huntsman, hermit grave,
May peaceful lead a wild-wood life.
In these have found we each a home,
Rude, it is true,—but comfort share,
As after sportsman's forest roam,
We gayly feast on mountain fare.
And still, above these mountain caves,
There rises one, more grand in height,
Whose mossy court the streamlet laves
In purest water, crystal bright;
Spacious, majestic, and embowered
By giant oaks, festooned with vine
Pendant with fruit, and blossom-showered,
Through which the laughing sunbeams shine.
And this, with fondest care, have we
Arranged, adorned, as best we might;
And though no palace,—still, will be
A fairy bower, with bride so bright!
An eyrie grand! for thee, our king!
An eagle nest, amid the cloud!
Until prepared to spread thy wing,
With mighty swoop, to cry aloud

*And scatter wide those birds of prey,
Vile ravens! dark in soul as hue;
Foul vultures! clouding our fair day,—
Unholy, base, and impious crew!”*

“Thanks, thanks, Count Pedro, for thy care!
Our gracious thanks to each and all,
But chiefly for this jewel rare,
So gently nursed in lordly hall.
My brave sweet-heart, but tender flower!
Unused to mountain storm and wind,
O'erjoyed am I, so fair a bower,
For this, my treasure, I may find.”

“Secure, at least, my prince, 'tis found
'Gainst wile or siege of storming band,
For Nature's walls guard all around,
As though our fortress she had planned!
And though our numbers sadly small,
Compared with that unholy horde,—
Bold hearts and valiant hands have all,
And on our side the blessed Lord!
No battlement, though raised with skill
By man's deep art or cunning bold,
May match our bulwarks, fortress hill,
Of rock and crag from nature's mould!—

As winds the path up Deva's side,
Fiercer and steeper grow the cliffs,
As foot of man they bold defied
By tottling crags and frightful rifts.
Ascent is there but one, I wis!
E'en that, dame Nature fain would close
By deep defile and dark abyss,
Through which a rushing torrent flows
Forever in this caldron deep,
To wildly seething, foaming pour
From rock to rock with whirling leap,
And constant, never-dying roar!
O'er this ravine's unceasing flow
A rude draw-bridge we firmly throw,
And thus cheat nature—and the foe
That seeks to pass, with grave below!
For should the Moslem here invade,
This crafty game may well be played:—
Meet we in combat 'neath the ridge,
Retreat, if need be, o'er the bridge;
Decoying thus the rushing Moor
To quick pursuit—of conquest sure,
On to the bridge we safe have passed,
When rings their Techir cry, the last!—
A wily sev'ring of the cord
That knits that bridge o'er torrent's flow!

*When, with one crash, must plunge the horde
Deep in the seething gulf below !*

Was ever known so sure a fort ?

Was ever tower more grand and high ?

Was ever held more gorgeous court,

Sun, moon, star-crowned in heav'nly sky ? ”

Replied the prince, “ We are much blessed,—

And Nature is most kind and bland,

Who, in her bosom giveth rest,

And sheltering arms to guard our band !

And grateful, too, in sooth, are we,

That for our lambs God giveth ‘ fold,’—

My bride, thy lovely daughters three,

The wives and children of our bold.

For much fear I, few days may pass,

Ere, of our flight become full sure,

In hot pursuit will rush that mass,

Apostate father—rival Moor !

But now with Nature laugh may we

At fury spent, impotent rage !

Not here th’ oppressors’ power we’ll see,

But ’gainst them conq’ring battle wage !

And greatly should the mind be prized,

That craftily, with skilful plan,

The subtle net, the trap devised,
Which maketh sure of that dark van ! ”

Lo ! high above, as in mid-air,
Planted upon a jutting rock,
Glitters a cross, raised, brightly fair,
As gleam of hope to Christ's poor flock,—
Huge, rudely carved, by Christian sons,
Unto their blessed symbol true,
Where fondly placed, those faithful ones,
Their Syrian blades to glitt'ring view.
From far and wide that cross is seen,—
In sunny rays, to gleam with light,
And still, full clear in soft moon sheen,
It glistens through the calm, dark night ;
And oft poor wand'ers o'er the plain,
The fainting, scattered of Christ's flock,
At our bright cross take hope again,
To lean once more on “ clefted rock,”
“ The rock of ages,” sure, fast hold
For all who cling with trusting zeal ;
Who keep brave heart and spirit bold,
And grateful, loving faith e'er feel.

Now soon the richer scenes are left,
Of varied orchards, pear, and lime,

With cot and hamlet, peace-bereft—

Fair citron bowers, and fragrant thyme.

Here, too, the plain begins to rise,

Gently ascending as they pass ;

Through heath and fern swarm bright fire-flies,

While starts the lark from dewy grass,

Before the wand'ring, midnight band,

Invading thus his forest-land.

All richly fair their pathway bright,

With sleeping buds, where cistus* sweet,

Covers the earth with blossoms white,

Breathing rare odors 'neath their feet ;

As crushed hearts, oft-times only give

Their sweetness in the darkest hour ;—

While yet in sunshine bright they live,

Show not their worth, till sorrows lower.

Still, flow'rets sweet their pathway line,

Of eglantine, and wild rose vine,

And chanting streamlets dancing play,

Throughout their devious, winding way.

The midnight moon smiles calmly down

O'er purple heath and trilling stream ;

* The cistus sheds at night its perfumed leaves of white.

Glancing where crags and ravines frown ;—
Through olive groves, with playful gleam ;
Kissing Auseva's star-crowned height
 (Majestic, tow'ring 'mid her skies),
With glorious, full effulgence bright,
 As in her smiles she sleeping lies ;
And bathed Asturia's hills in light
 Which their huge forms now full defines
In the clear west—their giant height
 Casting o'er Leon shadowy lines.

How calm, how varied is the scene !
How fraught with all of good and mild,
As blend now in the moon's fair sheen,
Grove, vega, streamlet, boulder wild !
All solemn, silent, save the note
 Of nightingale anon and then,
With whippowil's, that mournful float
 In answers clear from hill to glen ;
And hooting owl's discordant call,—
 And tramping of their noble steeds,
As 'neath the footstep, scattered fall
 Rich creeping vines, flowers, mountain weeds.

But now, more careful need they thread
 Uncertain mazes, mountain way,

Through gorge, o'er rocks with cautious tread,
That oft-times in their pathway lay ;
For nought of earth beams always fair,—
The smooth and rough, the dark and light,
Of good and ill alike to share,—
The glorious day and shadowed night.
More careful too, the prince, I ween,
Of that sweet flow'ret by his side,—
Anxious from every ill to screen
His wandering lamb, his mountain bride ;
Who droops no more—inspired by hope,
And love, and freedom's wild-wood air,
Bright, bravely now with all to cope,
That falleth to the trav'ler's share ;
As through the brush they wend their way,
Or deep ravine, in shadows hid
Of rocky spire and boulder gray
Looming as tower or pyramid !

Twining their path the stream along,
Which, from the mountain top and hills,
With sparkling smile and winning song,
Gathers her playmate springs and rills,
When mingling in one mazy dance,
Wilder and wilder still they leap,—

O'er mossy rock and wild-vine glance
And 'bove the splintered boulder steep ;
While louder, fiercer grows the roar,
As bounding on they frenzied go,
Till leaping, whirling, down they pour
All madly, in the gulf below :
But, from this depth, find outlet still,
Pure rills, that down the mountain stray ;
With gentle, sweetly murmuring trill
Along her mossy slopes to play ;
Blending again with each fair stream,
That so adorns Spain's glowing land,
On which bright eyes and moonbeams gleam
At dewy eve, 'mid breezes bland ;—
As one, his course of pleasure passed,
From youth's fresh spring, through streamlets
mild,
To torrents' seething gulf at last,
Would turn him from the vortex wild,
Again to seek the Light Above
In "pleasant ways" of truth and love ;
Passing from "troubled waters'" strife
To purer waves of peaceful life,
On gently flowing, happy tide,
Adown the stream of life to glide,

To reach at length the Heav'nly shore,
Where glory's waves roll evermore.
Now following the brooklet's way,
Up, up the mountain path they wind
Through dark defile, where not a ray
Of entrance may the moonlight find ;—
So deep, so shadowed dense with trees
Of pine and cedar, birch and oak,
That, save when rude winds raised the breeze,
Scarce e'er a ray of sunshine broke.
Louder and louder still the sound
Of waters, as they upward tend ;
Until, at length, their course is bound
By that deep gulf, that doth defend
Their garrison from ev'ry foe,
Or even friend, until the bridge
Be thrown, with care, above its flow,
And firmly knitted o'er the ridge.

Guards, bold and true, are stationed here,
And warder, ready for alarm,
To whom Count Pedro breathes in ear
The magic word, the pass-word charm—
And, *presto*, bridge of oak, most strong,
And closely knit, hangs o'er the deep !

While anxious guides the prince along
His precious charge, from steep to steep.
Fluttered her heart with terror wild,
So fearful, in the dead of night,
To that sweet palace-nurtured child,
That deep ravine, which torches' light
Brings out so dark and frightfully,
'Mid angry roar of waters near,—
How closely clingeth now doth she,
That fragile vine, to him so dear!
'Tis passed! they're o'er! portcullis fled!
And all stands quiet as before,
As if by wizard-charm thence sped,
As told in magic tales of yore!
A phantom bridge, scarce seen, when gone!
But crossed by no mere phantom band;
For yon they slowly pass along—
And here her guards, all mortal, stand!

Fainter and fainter comes the roar
Of rushing torrent to them now,
As wind they up the pebbly shore
Of merry stream, where elders bow,
And playful in its waters toss
Each berried branch of purple hue,

To sprinkle o'er rich banks of moss,
 In swaying breeze, their pilfered dew.
Its margin, fringed with fern and brake,
 With bush of hazel, quince, and vine,
That spreading o'er the ilex, make
 Fair elfin bowers, in soft moonshine.
Above, through beech, and giant oak,
 Their roots in rocky beds firm set,
Her slanting beams alternate broke,
 As bending to the winds they met
And kissed, and twined in fond embrace
 Their waving arms,—then, in coy play,
Retreat, return, reinterlace,
 To sweep with bounding spring away.

How gleam, in startled wingèd flight,
 Those darting swarms of sparkling flies !
Glancing as diamond lamps of night,
 Or fickle beam from maiden's eyes !
But now emerge they from the glen,
 Through grove of chestnuts gentle rise,
To pass along, all joyous, when
 The purple heath before them lies.
While full the moon again looks down,
 Cheering them on with radiant smile,

Without one angry, low'ring frown
Of boulder wild, or rock's defile.
But, as nought bright without alloy,
She cannot light them alway clear !
Brief time is there for moonlight joy,
For forest dense again they near ;—
But glimpses have they still, I ween,
Of softened brightness, yet to cheer,
Falls, now and then, a ray of sheen,
Speaking of cheering brightness near ;—
A brilliant, glowing Orb of Love,
As " Central Light,"— a light to shine,
As God, the merciful, above,
Who sheds on all His Love Divine,
To guard and bless through every hour,
Of pleasure bright, of grief and shade ;—
When summer's bloom, and winter's lower,—
A light and hope to never fade.

Blest consolation ! happy they,
Who, in a God of Love, e'er trust !
Who make His mercy sure, their stay
And feel, until consigned to dust
His shelt'ring arm will still sustain,
His mercy soften every woe,

His kindness soothe each grief and pain
Till freed from earthly thrall below ;
That He will guard unto the goal
Of Heav'nly light, of bliss and joy,
Where perfect rest finds wearied soul,—
Glory and peace without alloy !

Then, trusting faith and heart, we'll give
To Him, the All-Powerful God and wise,
While in His sunbeams we may lie,
And to His glorious kingdom rise
In angel brightness, free from sin,
From selfishness, deceit, or hate ;—
Nought baleful enters there within
The Bright Abode,—the “ Pearly Gate ! ”
But peace, and love, and charity,
And kindly heart to each and all
Must bear we true,—and gentle be
To those who err, or sinning fall.
That, as our Saviour looked upon
The hapless child of grief and woe,
We, too, may all self-glory shun,
And pity, while we mercy show,
And soothe and bind the wounded heart,
Sad drooping 'neath the ills of life ;

For know we not the wiles, or art,
That made that spirit error rife !
And know we less our own weak souls,
Ne'er tried by strong temptation's power,
On which no wave of trouble rolls,
No trials dark, bewildering lower.
Why ! what are we—to judge, condemn
The weakness of another's way,
The errors of our fellow men,
When sin we too, from day to day !
And if *we* love nor mercy show,
How may we ask it from above ?
And trust e'er bliss or Heav'n to know
Where Love sole reigns, and " God is Love ! "

Thus mused the prince, in placid mood,
In harmony with all things now ;—
His heart, by Love's sweet power subdued,—
'Neath her pure influence full to bow.
And smiling on his heart's dear flower,
He whispered soft, " O tyrant fair !
Who holdest me in thy loved power,
Thy chains, forevermore, I bear !
Escaped, in part, from prison wall,
Still must my spirit captive be,

Environed close in love's sweet thrall,
Whose gyves forever fetter me !
O blessed fetters ! rosy chain !
Ne'er would I loose one silken link,
But, in loved bondage, e'er remain,—
Thus, from his chalice, nectar drink ! ”
And pressing fondly to his lip
Her precious, tiny, lily-palm,—
“ What though I cup of sorrow sip,—
Here have I antidote and balm !
A Lethe sweet to drown all care,
A gleam of Heaven on earth, most bright,
An angel-love, mine heart to share,—
A star, to light my darkest night !
My life ! my love ! my blossom fair !
My crown of jewels, set in gold !
So rich with virtues bright and rare !
My lamb ! to rest within my fold ;
Enfolded in these arms' caress,
Enshrinèd in my heart's deep cells,
Mine angel-love ! to brightly bless !
Toward whom my grateful love so wells !—
Lord, make me *worthy* of Thy gift !
This gem, from out Thy casket rare !
And deign my soul more pure to lift
While this great blessing I may share ! ”

“Nay, nay, mine only love!” she sighed,
“Unworthy I, such praise of thine;
Thou takest but an earthly bride,
O’er full of faults;—and as that vine
Needs pruning here and guidance there,
For true, unerring, upward way,
Full much need I thy loving care
To guide or shield, each passing day.
But, leaning, clinging, fond and true,
As that frail, trembling, forest vine,
I turn alone, my love! to you,
E’er happy in thy love to shine!”

Tortuous still the path they chose,
Through dell and grove, o’er heath and hill;
Higher and higher yet it rose,
E’er winding with the murm’ring rill;
While pensively the stars look down,
As angels’ eyes upon their way;
As angels bright, when sorrows frown,
Fond, constant guard through darkest day.

Oh! could we *know* those whom we love,
Torn from us here and borne away,
Truly, oh! truly from above
May come, to cheer our darkened day!

Could we be sure they love us still
As when on earth, so true and fond,
Softened would be each grief and ill,
And Hope with joy would look beyond
To that blest realm, where, joined again,
In purest raptures, holy thrill,
The loved, united should remain,—
How deep would be the joy to fill,
And soothe, and bless the breaking heart,
All crushed and desolate with woe,—
To *know* that loving souls ne'er part,
But ever in fond union flow !

Why not ? Doth God, the “ God of love,”
Implant that germ within the soul
To perish in His courts above ?
Liveth it not beyond the goal ?—
In those fair realms beyond the sky,
Whose monarch rules supreme in love,
Shall love fraternal, filial, die ?
Wither conjugal love above ?
Oh no ! it may not, cannot be ;—
That purest, holiest germ Divine
Must live through all eternity !
Forever, brightly blooming, shine !—

Each gleam of fond affection's ray
Must beam through realms more fair and
bright,
Till blend all in one glorious day,
Blest by the Central Sun of light !

How fraught that lonely, silent way
With food for contemplation deep !—
In solemn night, the spirit's sway
Doth over all material sweep ;
Lifted the soul to higher strain,
Attuned to purer, holier chord ;—
Seem earthly joys and cares, how vain,
When drawn unto our Heav'nly Lord !

So journey they through night along,
In pensive meditation all ;
Still, sweetly, notes of bulbul's song
In richly liquid cadence fall ;
And oft the startled black-bird sprang,
Flutt'ring from out the bush in fright,
With cry of fear that shrilly rang,
Breaking the stillness of the night.
And many a lonely, weary mile
They travel on, with cautious pace,

Threading the path where moonbeams smile
Through branches old, that interlace,
And cast their grotesque shadows, strange,
In forms that Fancy quaintly views,
As thus, in her unfettered range,
In mazy dreams prose-life they lose.

CANTO III.

BUT lo ! again those lights appear
Which early met our wand'ers' sight,
When, at the mountain's base, with fear
And awe, they gazed upon its height.
When Don Theodmir from his side
A silver bugle raised, to sound
A note that rings all far and wide,
Echoing throughout the forest round ;
When, o'er the sighing of the breeze,
Above the rustling of the stream,
Come, borne on winds that stir the trees
A distant hum, a shout, a scream
Of human voices, mingling all,
From treble shrill to full bass note,
That higher, louder rise and fall,
Clearer and nearer still to float !
While tossing, waving torches flame,
And thick'ning masses rushing come

With joyous shout and wild acclaim,
To welcome royal wand'ers home !
And with impatient, swiftest speed
A swarming mass come hast'ning near,
All orderless, with none to lead,
Joining in wild, tumultuous cheer !

With fond, united rev'rence, round
In homage bend they to our Pair ;
When one full shout doth wide resound,
Of " Welcome to the Brave and Fair ! "
And " three times three " doth echoing ring,
Throughout the mountain clear ;
With " Viva ! welcome to our king !
Pelayo ! chieftain dear ! "
When, circling round them still more close,
And ranging all in order grave,
A welcome chorus full arose
Heart-felt, unto the Fair and Brave !

WELCOME.

Hail ! Pelayo, chief and king !
Loudly let the welkin ring
With fond welcome ! hail ! viva !
Leon's prince ! and Seville's star !

Sun of glory ! soon to rise,
With *thy star*, 'mid brighter skies !
Star of morn ! that heralds day,
Cheering now our clouded way !

Star of beauty ! thus art thou
Welcome to Auseva's brow ;—
Welcome, chieftain ! welcome, bride !
To our shelt'ring mountain side.

Welcome ! from true vassals all,
Welcome fond, from great and small,
Welcome ! prince, our chief and king,
Joyous welcome now we sing !

Peace thou bringest with thy *dove*—
Peace will fold her wings of love,
Over cross and country bright,—
Thou, our Sun ! dispelling night

With her clouds of dusky hue,
Swarthy Moslems, from our view,
Till the Crescent crumbling lies
Where our Cross shall glorious rise !

Welcome then to Fair and Brave !

Joyous welcome sing we all—
Prince ! our cross and land to save !
Blessings on thee ever fall !

Grandsires, warriors bend the knee,
Infant hands uplifted are,
Praying blessings bright on thee,
Royal king ! and bride-queen fair !

Let the welkin ring
O'er rock, and hill, and valley,
Borne on zephyr's wing,
While round our chief we rally.

Gayly, joyous sing,
From loving hearts' deep fountain,
Welcome ! bride and king,
To freedom and our mountain !

All fondly sung that welcome lay,
In merry strain, and blithely gay,
While pure, sweet tones of child-like note
Above that chorus clearly float,
Rising o'er voices of the band,
As cherub-tones from Blessed Land !—

A bird-like voice of liquid ring,
In "welcome to the queen and king."
When marked our Fair a lovely youth,
 A boy of tender year,
With brow of innocence and truth,
 And eye of lustre clear :
Luxuriant locks of raven hue,
 And face of classic mould ;
A child of beauty, rare to view—
 A mimic warrior bold !
Count Pedro's son, and hope, and heir—
A bud of richest promise fair,
Alphonse, by name, who, on our bride
Fixed earnest gaze,—close by her side,
With kindling cheek and eye to stand
 In rev'rent, loving joy,—
A blossom bright, amid the band,
 That lovely, fearless boy !
A young Adonis seems he there,
 As o'er his brow, full, broad, and white,
Float lightly curls of silken hair
 Upon the rising breeze of night ;
While clear his silv'ry treble voice
Rings sweetly, " Welcome ! hail ! rejoice ! "
His pæan to the royal pair,
In glad ovation bearing share.

Smileth proud, Count Pedro there,
Upon his precious child !
Smileth fond, the mother fair,
The Lady Constance mild ;
While raised the sire in full heart pride,
The elfin palm of that pure child,
And bending to the royal bride,
Thus courteous spake, in accents mild :—
“ Fair ladye queen ! all beauteous mine !
Here offer I unto thy shrine,
My best heart’s blood, my pride ! my joy !
In this, my noble hero-boy !
With love to serve and tend thee e’er,
In all that falls to page’s share ;
And yet, anon, if need there be,
To raise his faithful arm for thee ! ”

Bright smiled Alphonse, and clear replied,
“ I’ faith I will, sweet ladye bride !
And as the dew unto the flower,
I’d be to thee from this dear hour, ”—
Then kissed the hand extended there
To fond caress his forehead fair ;—
While silv’ry clear her voice was heard,
As sweetest tone of forest-bird,—

“Ay! as the dew-drop to the rose,
That fond her breast opes to enclose
The pure, refreshing gem of light,
Beauteous, and gladd’ning to the sight,
So, with kind thanks, Don Pedro, we
Will ever shelter lovingly,
In fond heart-fold, thy blossom bright,
Bestowed, received in love this night.”

Exclaimed the prince,—“Now, by my rood!
In sure, brief time, all fair and good,
We’ll knight thee, boy, with honors bright!—
Thou ‘dew-gem’! to our queen of light!”

“Thanks, royal sire!” replied the boy,
“And I will prove no carpet-toy,
But, in thy battles, mayhap, fight,
And bravely earn my honors right!”

Proud, standing by her palfrey there,
Remains he near his mistress fair,
While smile the mother, sisters, all,
At knightly pride in one so small!
In royal pagedom’s service pressed,
As favored child henceforth caressed,

To bide near Zillah's presence bright,
As tiny guard, or elfin-knight.
And well he loved his ladye fair,
Serving with zeal and earnest care ;
And well Pelayo joyed to see
That child-boy's love and bravery.

Now gath'ring round, as children fond,
They leading, escort, cheering on,
Unto a grove, that lies beyond,
With bounding step, vivas ! and song.
Stately the trees of elm and beech,
Entwined with vines that mantling spread,
And in festooning garlands reach
From tree to tree, with pendants red,
Purple, and green, and blossoms fair,
All clust'ring rich, to form a bower
Of loveliness and beauty rare,
Where Nature weaves her wond'rous power !
Sweet as the breeze from Araby,
The odors breathing from their flowers,
Whose blossoms fall from vine and tree,
In rosy, snowy, perfumed showers,
Sprinkling the mossy carpet green
With silken leaves of richest hue,

In varied forms of floral sheen,
As fall they, bathed in evening dew.

A Druid grove it seemeth fair !
So strangely beautiful and wild,
Where mystic orgies might hold share,
As moonbeams brightly glancing smiled.
For, in the centre of this grove,
A circle rich of bay trees rose,
Through which the laurel graceful wove,
And thus, all strangely, did enclose
A rock, that altar blest might seem,
Draped fair with moss and twining vine,
While o'er its side a tiny stream
Came trickling down in crystal line :
Richly arrayed with lilies white—
Ne'er was cathedral, grandly fair,
So lovely graced with altar bright,
As that decked for our regal pair !

Lo ! on that altar, standeth there
The *Holy Ark* ! that blest doth bear
Most wond'rous "relics !" happ'ly saved
By Urban, bishop loved, who braved
Fierce peril dire,—when tocsin bell,
And "*Lelie cry*,"* and "*Techir yell*,"

* The Faith-cry of the Moors.

Told that Toledo's glory bright
Had fallen to the sons of night!
When her cathedral's cross lay low,
Beneath the tread of Moslem foe,
With holy forethought, while all fled,
Quick to his sacred altar sped,
Her precious "Relics" blest, to spare
From impious profanation's share;
Bearing them to Asturia's breast,
Within her shelt'ring fold to rest.
And in that ark, old legends say,
"Mementos marvellous did lay!"
Pieces, (they say it is most true,)
Are plainly seen to "favored view,"
Of holy cross our Saviour bore!
The garment last on earth He wore!
The ground His sacred feet had pressed!
The kerchief, "Sudorà," blest!
Wherein His sacred head was bound,
Stained, blood Divine! from brow thorn-crowned!
The "blessed bread" His hand once broke!
St. Ildoponse's holy "cope;—"
Of sacred Bible, leaves Divine
From Holy Saints, with "pledges" line
Its sacred sides;—whose outer part
Is curious lain, with ancient art,

In silver, gilt, all richly fraught,—
With twelve Apostles quaintly wrought.—
In bas relief those sides rare traced
“ Our Ladye’s ” history—silver chased.
A crucifix, engraved in gold,
Upon its cover all behold,—
With Latin lines, four, plainly found,
In silver letters graved around.
And farther still, hath History told,—
That on this rock a cross of gold,
From Heav’n, by angel hands, was lain,
In blessing to brave sons of Spain !
A cross, carved from an aged oak,
Twined close with lilies, pure arose
From that rock-altar, and awoke
Thought of our Saviour and His woes.
Oh ! what the sorrows of each son,
Compared with His, of suff’ring Spain,
Who, crucified, our vict’ry won,—
And for our sins,—was martyr’d ! slain !

With loving kindness now doth stand
Bishop Centerio by our bride,
Bending, to raise her lily hand,
And bear her from the palfrey’s side.

While gather round, fond maidens fair,
Who lead unto a myrtle bower,
To wreathe her silken, sunny hair
With sweet buds of the orange flower.
A tissue robe envelops now
Her beauteous form in silv'ry sheen,—
A maiden pure, to take her vow
Of heart and hand—fair beauty's queen!
An angel bright, for Heav'nly vow ;—
Veiled in transparent folds of light,
Floating, confined upon her brow
With one sweet bud—a lily white.

As “Graces three” seem bride-maids fair,
Count Pedro's daughters, draped in white,
While maiden friends bear loving share
In vestal train,—“liege-ladyes” bright.—
And shine in contrast, raven eyes,
Wherein a world of witch'ry lies,
With Sovereign Ladye's orbs of blue,
Where Heav'n's light of love beams through.

Now draws Centerio near, to bless
This sweetest lamb of all his flock ;—
Matron and maiden fond caress,
And lead her to the altar-rock.

That rock, her truth, is all as strong ;
As pure her spirit, as the stream
Which silv'ry runs its sides along
So brightly in the moonlit gleam.
And pure and lovely as the flower
That decks the moss-grown altar fair,
She stood within that forest-bower,
Of nature's works *most* choice and rare !
Glancing, the moonbeams sweetly fell
With tender love upon her face,
As angel smiles, that fain would dwell
Forever, on such earthly grace.

Rich, too, in every noble grace,
The royal bridegroom gazed with pride
And welling love upon the face
Of his all-beauteous, mountain bride !

Without the border of the grove,
The multitude, all rev'rent, stand ;
And, in the circle, lattice wove
Of richest vines,—their noble band.
And in that chancelled sanctum small,
With laurel, bays, encircled, now
Stand bride and groom, fair maidens all,
With priests and friends, for nuptial vow.



And there, in *God's* cathedral grand,
Lighted by myriad stars on high,
Guarded by Angels pure, we'll stand,
Our canopy, the glorious sky.

By wild torch-light and moon's last smile,—
For wanes she now as day draws near,—
Seems all, more as enchanter's wile
Than aught of real might appear!

In solemn silence hushed is all,
Save but the rippling of the stream,
And night-bird's note, or stray leaf's fall,
While peeping stars, soft, twinkling beam.
Hushed is all sound, when, full and clear,
The holy bishop's voice doth now
Arise, to join that twain so dear,
In sacred, loving, marriage-vow.

Oh! what a grand and goodly sight
That group within the circlet screen!
Grove, altar, priests, "liege-ladyes" bright,
Bride, royal groom,—a fairy scene!
With warriors, vassals,—torches glow;
And far in east a glimm'ring ray
Of dawn appears, just tinging low,
Horizon clear, with promised day.

And rituals are solemn done,—
The holy rites are uttered now,—

And God hath joined that pair as one,
While by the altar low they bow ;
And ev'ry form, within, without
Those circles, bends in earnest prayer,—
When all arise,—while one clear shout
Of rapture fills the morning air
For bride and groom ! their king and queen !
But lo ! behold yon omen bright !
Glowing in eastern skies, is seen
Aurora, rising, bathed in light !
Smiling from out her vapory bed,
All blushing rich in rosy glow,
While glist'ning dew-drops radiance shed
O'er tree and shrub and flower, below.
Slowly, gray shadows pass away,—
Vanish the mists from mountain side,
As glorious Morn leads in the day,
With all her gorgeous pomp and pride !

And brightly beam the radiant eyes
Of our brave prince, with love and pride,
Secure, now, of his blessed prize,—
The lovely being by his side !
Brief time hath he to whisper low,
“ Mine ! mine alone !—my life ! my bride !

Come now to me, or weal or woe,
Thy love will brighten darkest tide!"
Ere fond epithalamiums ring,
Nobles and vassals bearing share,—
In Nuptial Lay to gayly sing
Their blessing on the Royal Pair.

EPITHALAMIUM.

God bless our King and Queen!
Spaniards' glory proud!—
Bright now the silv'ry sheen
Lineth our dark cloud!

Glancing in cheering ray,
Fair, hopeful gleaming,—
O'er sad and darkened way,
Joyously beaming!

Lo! now Aurora bright!—
Roseate dawning!
So fadeth gloomy night—
Glorious, our morning!

God bless our Royal Bride!
Star! heav'nly seeming!

Rising o'er stormy tide,
Radiant beaming!

God save our Prince and King!
Leave him, oh! never!
Soon may the pæan ring,—
Victory forever!

God bless our Royal Chief!
Brave Pelayo, King!
Hastening to our relief,
While the wild woods ring.

Hail! to our Queen and King!
Evermore to reign
O'er hearts that joyous sing
Viva! Loved of Spain!

Now bear they forth a rustic throne
Of osier vines, close interwove,—
With flow'rets white, pure overstrown,
Which place they in the sanctum grove
Before that bay-crowned altar, where
Are standing groom and bride, so fair,
Awaiting farther holy rite
Than that which heart and hand may plight;—

High mass, and coronation yet,
And Vow for Spain—none may forget—
Nor feast, or merry bridal ring
Ere rural crowned their Queen and King.

How decked was all in Beauty's light !
Breathing of naught but Nature's power ;
As if the wand of fairy sprite
Had waved o'er all this sylvan bower !
Fair censers swung, of pomègran'te,
Scooped from their rinds of crimson hue,
Exhaling odors from each plant,
Of fragrance, fresh with morning dew.
Enchanted spot ! where Fays court hold,
For brave and fair, 'twixt Heav'n and earth !
As Moslem's fancy doth behold
His " Prophet " till celestial birth :—
By God and all good angels blest,—
A sainted spot, nearest to Heaven,—
A sanctuary and peaceful rest
So kindly to Spain's scattered given,
To shield and guard them from the foe,
To fill their minds with holy thought
That softens every earthly woe,—
Sole balm for bosoms, sorrow fraught.

Again the chant, again the prayer,
And coronation rites are said :
Now laurel wreaths, and green bay fair
Twine o'er pure brow—and royal head ;
While friars grave, and maidens bright,
Lead there unto the forest throne
Spain's lawful King and Queen of light,
Whose beauty as the morning shone !
And friars, elder still, advance,
Bishop Urbino at their head,
With solemn chant and Heav'n-ward glance,
To bend before the newly wed.
Placing within the royal hand
A sceptre, formed from branches three,
A triune-wrought, symbolic wand,
Twined from bay, olive, and oak tree ;—
Of firmness, valor, peace to tell,—
Admonishing, e'er silently,
To cherish all these virtues well,
And rev'rence Holy Trinity ;—
And over-twined with lilies white,
Whose purity should reign o'er all ;—
Each royal deed be pure and bright ;
That never stain of darkness fall,
To sully, or disgrace the name
Of Spain's Great Ruler, evermore,

That alway shall resound with fame
Of virtues rare, from shore to shore.

Then cried Centerio, loud and clear,
"Spaniards! behold your Chief and King!
Swear ye to him allegiance dear,
Until your souls for Heav'n take wing?"
All bending low, with close-crossed arms,
As one full voice,—“We swear,” arose,
“For us, our seed, to guard from harms,
E'er faithful serve, destroy his foes,
And loyal prove to this our king,
Our country, and her faith, so dear,—
Untiringly his war-cry ring
Till risen Spain in splendor clear!”

Fluttered fair maids, as dove-lets round,
While Gomez, faithful Gomez, stood
Near his dear master, King now crowned!
With standard, shield, and bright sword good;
And close beside his ladye-queen,
Alphonse, the cherub child,
With upraised brow, is constant seen,
And eyes that fondly smiled.
As Cupid unto Venus bright
Nestling with loving joy,

Clipt of his wings, the saucy wight !
Appears that lovely boy.

O'er royal heads, in graceful fold,
And forming background, crimson bright,
Droop banners, that in days of old,
Have floated high through bravest fight !
Placing within the lily palm
Of his loved Queen, the sceptre-wand,
The King, in tones clear, fond, and calm,
Addressed her thus :—" In thy dear hand
I place this sceptre, fair and pure,
Queen of my heart, my throne, and land !
As pledge of love and fealty sure,
Of us, and of our noble band,
To whom I now proclaim thee Queen,
Alike of throne, and Spain, as heart ;
For regal homage, full, I ween,
My Queen must share an equal part."

Descending then from rural throne,
Toward the centre of the grove,
Unto a rock, with moss o'er-grown,
He, kneeling, raised his eyes above,
In humble, ardent, silent prayer
That God would aid him well to keep

The vow that soon must rise through air
To Heav'nly realms,—that he might reap
Laurels most pure, from duty done
In sternest sense,—in ev'ry deed ;—
Willing to fall for victory won,—
For cross and country, nobly bleed.
Deep silence reigned throughout the crowd,
As that heart-prayer arose on high,
While, kneeling, all assembled bowed,
And brighter gleamed the eastern sky,—
As if it beamed with angel smile,
Of joy, for aspiration given,
From noble souls, true, free from guile,—
Pure, holy prayer ! that wings to Heaven !

Arose Centerio, and drew nigh
The king, to place within his hand
An oaken cross, which raised he high,
Then rev'rent kissed,—while bowed the band.
When grave, Urbino's voice arose :—
“ King ! hoped salvation of our land !
Deliv'rer of thy people's woes !
Chief of our brave and stalwart band !
Sole heir now to thy country's throne !
We look alone to thee, and God,

To still Spain's suff'ring, anguished moan,
And save the land our fathers trod !
Protect her from the spoiler's hand,
Throw off the despot, tyrant-yoke,
Raise up her enslaved, trampled band ;
And not until her chains are broke,
Give rest or slumber to thy soul,
As we, with thee, now swear to do,
Until the light of Freedom's goal
We all attain, Spain rise anew !—
In victory all glorious fair
In victory all shining bright ;
Till victory's shout shall rend the air,
And Peace descend in robes of light.

“Dost vow thy country's wrongs to right ?
Dost swear to work, through weal and woe,
To save her honor purely bright ?
To die, or crush the invading foe ?
Swear'st thou to shield her welfare e'er,
Protect her from each foreign foe ;
Her suff'rings and her grief to share,
Until released from every woe ?
Bravely to fight, and bleed, and fall,
If need be, in her glorious cause,

E'er ready for her rights to call,—
Ne'er in thy duty stern, to pause?
Righteous to govern,—each pure law
Well based on equity and love;
To guard against each unjust flaw,
And serve thy God who reigns above?
And Him alone, in purity,
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Until His Heav'nly Courts to thee
Shall opened be, resigned thy post
As earthly monarch?—when this sound
Shall cause thy heart with joy to thrill,—
'Weighed in the balance, faithful found!'
Drink thou from Heav'nly-flowing rill,
Freely and fully, of the joy
Celestial that the faithful share,—
Angelic draughts, without alloy!—
Behold thy Father's Kingdom fair!"

Thus spake th' archbishop, when replied
The king, in accents firm and clear:—
"Father! my country's woes have cried
Long, loud, and high, from far and near,
And base were he, Spain's meanest son,
Who would not to her rescue fly,

And bravely fight, nor danger shun,—
For victory to fall, or die ! ”

Raised he again that cross on high,—
As if inspired, his soul gushed forth !—
“ Great God ! who to all prayer art nigh,
Hear now, while plight we solemn troth !
Here do I dedicate to Spain,
To Thee, and to our Queen, most dear,
My sword, my soul, my life, each vein
Of heart’s best blood, nor faint or fear ;
But lead, and fight with my good sword,
Bravely and fearless to the end ;
And with Thine aid destroy the horde ;—
To chains, or “ Eblis ” * each slave send !
To raise again our fallen Spain,
To wave aloft her Leon crest,
And plant her banner broad again
From Auseva to Ana west !
To govern and direct with love,
And earnest seeking after right ;
Thee serve alone, my God above ;—
And seek to shield from error’s night,
My country’s souls, and lead them e’er
In pleasant paths of truth and peace,

* Prince of Darkness.

Of Wisdom's ways, that all may share,
And comfort find, till earth-life cease."

Again that oaken cross he raised,
And to his lips devoutly pressed,
Exclaiming,—“ God, our Lord, be praised !
Record my vow—His angels blest !
What say ye, trampled sons of Spain !
Shall one lone vow be written there ?—
Rise ye, in vengeance, for our slain ?
Willing are ye, base yoke to bear
Of the invading, impious crew,
Who trample our dear cross in dust,
Who hold that cross to scoffing view,
And in Mahomet place their trust ?
Shall we to foreign vultures yield,—
Enslaved to eat our bitter bread ?
Or, bravely will ye good-sword wield,
By me, your King, e'er loving led ?
Swear ye, now, vengeance on the foe ?
Smite, will ye, the oppressor low ?—
Offer ye all, here, with me now,
To Heav'n, your free and solemn vow ?
Swear ye, to strike for our loved cross,
Our honor, and our native land ?

And to revenge our brethrens' loss,—
Our noble, martyred, slaughtered band?—
To league ne'er with th' accursed foe?
Ne'er recreant prove to faith or law?
Ne'er rest from combat's strife to know,
But ceaseless wage perpetual war,
Until our dear and sullied land
Be cleansed from each polluting foe,
Raised every brave and valiant hand
To fell the vile oppressor low?
To lift our glorious banner high?
Base blood to spill for our brave slain?
And raise again the battle cry
Of '*Santiago! Vengeance! Spain!*'?"

Aloft he raised the oaken cross,
Gazing upon his stalwart band!
Then, kneeling on that rock of moss,
Toward Heaven waved his outstretched hand!

As if his words had magic sound,
Bent was each knee, upraised each hand,
While swelled, as one full voice, around,
The solemn vow of that brave band:—
"Hear us, O God! thy people, now,
For us, and for our sons, we vow,

To offer up our blood and life,
If need be, in our freedom's strife;
To fight for all we hold most dear,
Our faith, our country, and our king;
Never to falter, faint, or fear,
But earnest battle song to sing.
As Holocaust, all free to die
For these, and for our brethren slain,
While loud we raise the wild war-cry
'For Vengeance! Victory! and Spain!'
Aid Thou, O God! and hear us now!—
May we not pray and strive in vain!
Receive our one united vow!—
Hear Leon! Auria! Heav'n! and Spain!"
Then loud arose one cheering strain!—
Throughout the hills it ringeth round!
"Pelayo! Victory! and Spain!"
Reëchoing to remotest bound
Of mountain, forest, valleys all!
Again, again to rise and fall,
As though that heart-united strain
Thrilled through each pulse of suff'ring Spain!—
As echoed back that "*Vow for Spain,*"
Rolling o'er hills in fading strain,—
With glory bright, the sun shone out!
When rose another ringing shout

Of greeting to the god of day,
Who thus burst forth with brilliant ray,—
Bright harbinger of joy and love,—
An omen fair from Heav'n above!
As fain he too would come, to cheer
With hopeful light Spain's children dear;
And comfort her down-trodden band,
With promised brightness to their land!
Beloved Spain! who, through night-cloud
Of swarthy Moslem, cries aloud
For light and comfort from the skies,
To raise her, ere she hopeless dies!

Look! as that orb in splendor rolls
His eastern way, and wings unfolds
Of glorious brightness, how they fall
Upon that cross! as if to call
Each eye and heart to view, with pride,
That symbol, tow'ring on the side
Of highest peak, in glory bright,
Radiant with glances of God's light!

Again, again the mountain rang,
Till from the copse the wild deer sprang;
Up rose the lark, to pinion poise,
In terror at the wild'ring noise!

Casting one look of wild affright,
While glittered from his wings, in light,
Bright sparkling drops, as dew-gems shed,
Pilfered from last night's grassy bed.
Startled the owl from morning dream,
To join her voice in clam'rous scream;
While full and clear the blackbird sang
Her matin-vow, that merry rang.
Trilled the wild streams, in rippling joy,
 Their liquid chant, in winding dance,
With bord'ring vines and flowers to toy
 In sparkling smile, 'neath sunbeam's glance.
Tossed high their heads in morning breeze,
 Old forest oaks, there tow'ring proud,
Breaking their light and mist-crowned wreaths
 In waving joy, as they too vowed
And wafted, toward the realm above,
 That *oath* which all of earth there nigh
Seemed off'ring, in fond, truthful love,
 To God, the Heav'nly Father high;—
While slow the mists rose from the side
 Of mountain, valley, hill, and dale,
Soft, gently spreading, far and wide,
 Toward heaven, in floating, vapory veil.
Advanced Urbino, with raised cross,
And, kneeling, thus addressed his God:

“Great Father! who didst save the Lost
And scattered Tribe who felt thy rod,
Look down, we pray thee, on us now!
Pity our woes, and hear our call!
Receive thy children’s offered vow,
For victory and the Moslem fall!
Bless Thou our King, now chosen here,
With wisdom, strength, to do all right;
Be Thou unto him ever near,—
Surround him with Thine angels bright,
That Holy Influence may so blend
With all his own high, noble power,
That bravely, e’er, unto the end,
He may endure, till brighter hour
Effulgent, fair, on Spain shall dawn,
And glory, reilluminated, break,
As beams to us this beauteous morn!
As glorious doth yon sun awake!—
Bless each and all assembled here,
Our people sad throughout the land;
Protect their wives and children dear,
With Thine all-powerful, gracious Hand!”

Gravely rising now from prayer,
Benedictions solemn fall

Over all assembled there,
Royal—Noble—Warriors all.

“*Benedicat vos,*
Omnipotens Deus,
Pater et Filius,
Et Spiritus Sanctus.
Amen.”

CANTO IV.

BUT turn we to our Lovers now,
 So joyous, beautiful, and true!
So blest, in mutual, loving vow!
 To finish well this Eden view!
Soon, nobles lead, full time I ween,
 To Royal Cave, fair, wide, and vast,
Where sumptuous bridal-feast hath been
 Prepared, to break their lengthened fast.
Less than an arrow's flight, there grew
 Two lofty elms, whose limbs entwine,
And, drooping, hide from casual view
 A spacious cave, whose porch, with vine
Of eglantine and wild rose sweet,
 Was draped, festooned, most wondrous fair,
In graceful garlands rich to meet,
 And fill with fragrance all the air.
Fronting these trees, a mossy green
 Sloped gently down, encircled quite

With hazels, that, all shimm'ring seen,
Formed grove of beauty, freshly bright! —
Over their boughs' extended reach,
Wild running vines, lithe spreading, threw
Their tendrils to fair trees of beech,
And thus a canopy o'er-grew,
Pendent with fragrant blossoms white,
With fruit, of crimson, purple hue,
Gleaming as jewels clear and bright
When sun-beams lighted them to view.
And, in the centre of the green,
A fairy fountain lulling played;
While, in a mimic pond, were seen
Bright speckled fish, golden arrayed:—
Fair entrance to a fairy bower!
Now part the branches—raise the vine,—
Put lovingly aside each flower,—
And enter we this bridal shrine!

Oh! wond'rous power of Nature's own!—
Hall after hall of marble white,
Where clear stalactites pendent shone,
Reflecting rainbow colors bright!
And suites of spacious chambers high,
With fair boudoirs attached thereto,

And domes, through which the azure sky,
'Mid covert openings, sly peeped through !

All richly decked her court with flowers,—
Filled natural vases with their charms,
While at the porch and through the bowers
Warbled sweet birds till evening calm,
When Philomel, her mellow strain
Enlinked in concord's dulcet chain,
And harmony, throughout the wild,
Continuous welled, till morning smiled ;
When trilled again the lark his lay
In matin chant to herald day,
Until one anthem ceaseless rolled
In praise to Him the God of Old,—
From Nature's choristers, that rang
Their gushing joy from eve to morn,—
From morn till eve, His praises sang,
With midnight stars and morning dawn ;
While cushat doves, with cooing tone
Of happy joy and love, had placed
Their nests amid wild-roses grown
Over the portal, blossom-graced.

Busy had been each skilful hand
Of artist, maid, and matron there,

To deck that cave, fondly had planned
To drape with taste and beauty rare
Each hall, with every fragrant flower
Breathing sweet odors all around,
Where, fairest of this sylvan bower,
The Sanctum of our Queen was found
With niches, alcoves, natural-graced,
Where mountain sculptors fondly placed
Statue and vase, in idle hour,
Wrought with exact artistic power,
To please the fancy of their queen,
To deck with works of art her bower,
And beauties, ne'er in court-life seen,
Of mountain's fairest vine and flower.
The marble floor with heath o'erspread,
Whose purple blossoms raised to meet
With kiss of love her fairy tread,
Exhaling fragrance richly sweet.
And, in an alcove, osier couch
Spread with the myrtle fresh, and thyme,
And richest moss, that one might vouch
With hidden eyes, was down most fine.
And fleecy covering, soft and white,
Culled from the flocks for their "Pet Lamb,"
Forced from her home to mountain flight,—
Still guarded by the "Great I Am."

Nor lack they yet fine linen here,
Or other needs of palace life ;
For Inez, for her mistress dear,
Had all their panniers filled, well rife,
With comforts that the wild-wood ne'er
Could substitute, or hope to find ;
While Gomez, too, her zeal doth share,—
Each striving, with deep interest kind,
To soften every ill and care,
To add each comfort in their power,
And thus enable well to bear
Her rustic life, their palace flower.
Frescoed the walls with lilies white,
Garlands of lilies draped around,
Emblem of her pure spirit bright ;—
While orange-buds and myrtle wound
Each vase and statue, breathing fair
Of bridal love and constancy,
Which each to each should ever bear
Through life—through all eternity.

But look we in the vast saloon,
Glitt'ring with all those rainbow drops
How generous Nature in this boon !
Who not alone at comfort stops,

But decorates, to please the eye,
 With bright prismatic beauties rare,
Her canopy, upraised on high,
 Above that table's sumptuous fare
Of every game the mountain gave,
Of every fish her waters lave,
Gathered from all that mountain side,
To grace the 'Board' of King and Bride.
Rich fruit from every bearing tree,
 Sweet berries from each bush and vine,
With honey from the forest bee,
 And draughts of purest native wine ;
Pomegranate, citron, peach, and pear,
Bright cherries and acava fair,
Orange and melon, fig and lime,
All fruits and berries of that clime ;
Nuts from the hazel, chestnut, beech,
Almond and filbert,—berries each,—
Straw, black, and raspberries from side
And sunny height of mountain wide :
Epagners, crowned with fruit and flower,
 Complete that table's ample spread ;—
And must we not forget Spain's dower
 Of white and wholesome chestnut bread.

Fell flashing rays on crystal drop,
From sandal and sweet citron wood
That burned within that fairy grot
In marble cassolets ;—and stood
Vassals, whose rods of clove illume,
And wave an incense richly sweet,
Pervading all with rare perfume,—
Magnetic,—that the senses meet,
And soothe to softest harmony
All care, and ill, and passing woe,
While falls, as gentle minstrelsy,
The lulling sound of water's flow.

Raised at the banquet's head a seat
All canopied with banners bright,
While spread beneath, for royal feet,
Were mats of moss and fleece of white.
Hither were led the king and queen,
Unto this cavern's banquet throne,
Where, cynosure of that bright scene,
Fair Zillah still most beauteous shone !
While jasmine wreaths, and roses red,
Entwined around stalactites clear,
Drooping, in fragrance, o'er each head,—
Oft kissing cheek and shoulder near.

The monarch, noble, dignified,
 Apollo,—Mars,—to fancy seemed,
Combined in one ;—search far and wide,
 A couple ne'er so perfect beamed
Upon a fond and loving court,
 As this, our King and Queen of Spain !
While near, were placed Braves that had fought,
 Fair bride-maids, nobles of their train,
Matron and priests—all gently born,
 Who cast away now far and wide
All sorrow on this joyous morn,—
 Happy in their dear king and bride ;
While toast and song, with merry glee,
 Fill up the measure full and high,
Of pure and happy harmony,—
 While gayly flit the moments by
In that strange mountain-cavern wild
 That ne'er had seen such feast before,—
Graced by an Oread-nymph so mild,
 Whom all must love—and *one* adore !

And well, in truth, adored were she,—
 Fair as an angel pure to bless
His life and home where'er to be,
 With all of woman's loveliness !

Those eyes so bright—of heaven's own hue,
So sweet with love's confiding ray!—
His deep impassioned glance so true
As though it ne'er could turn away
From gazing e'er with welling bliss
And heart-felt joy, ne'er known before,
Upon such blessing, now all his,
His, his alone, forevermore!—
O happy pair! united now
In holy love's fond plighted vow!
Nor father,—rival,—e'er may part
Or sever now, fond wedded heart.
And all the brightness of that morn,
Flower, bird, and streamlet rippling by,—
Hill, dale, and valley, sunny lawn,—
Naught, half so fair on mountain high,
As that blest pair,—beaming with love!
All glorious light! spark from Above!
Gleaming with soul-fraught flashes deep,
Electric, wildly fond to sweep
With thrilling rapture's holiest power,
Fond hearts, in that gay bridal hour!

And glances flash from maidens' eyes
Grey, black, and azure too, I ween!

On bravest knights, who may defy
Aught else, but not such weapons keen,
That penetrate all armor's show,
Piercing bold hearts full deep and sure !
Conquering, ere yet its victim know,
With wound most fatal, passing cure !—
But still, they fall not cowards there,—
Return they freely Cupid's fire,
Wounding in turn the daring fair,
As tones respond to full-struck lyre.

No ! ne'er, I ween ! by night or day,
That mountain shone one half so gay
As now, with hearts and beauty bright,
It beamed in joy and love's delight !
For sweetest harmony there crowned
The scene, each spirit, and the hour ;—
And as the buds there bloomed around,
Hearts opened to love's witching power !
And all is joy and ecstasy !
While melting,—martial songs resound,
Until again all rise to see
The Pledge for king and queen pass round ;
When from the feast they turn away,
Each free to seek his pleasure best ;—

The loving, 'mid sweet groves to stray,—
The aged, to more quiet rest.

And there were tender vows, I wis,
Breathed 'neath the myrtle bowers that day,
And fondest seal, in nectar kiss,
With Cupid, monarch arch, to sway
And thrill, amid the aspen trees,
Sweet-hearts, to quiver as their leaves,
Touched by the power of his loved thrall,
Till, conquered, they all willing fall,
Gay, happy captives ! glad to lie
In rosy bonds,—'neath sweetest power ;
Nor from these chains would ever fly,—
Or ransomed be, by richest dower.

How lovely, too, those mountain maids !
As caged-birds loosed in forest-wild,—
As Oreads bright, in green-wood shades,
Or pure descended angels mild !—
And children sport in gayest mood
All merrily, and filled with glee,
There chasing up and down the wood
Each butterfly and humming bee ;
Or, frolicking young naiads seen
In rivulets, 'mid broad leaves green ;—

Laving their white and tiny feet
In pebbly brooks, where wild flowers sweet
Dip, from their margins, in the breeze
That bends their heads and sways the trees,
Tossing each ringlet, sunny bright,
Of cherub child, as elfin sprite.

And friars pace by lonely way
In holy meditation deep,
Their breviary, and prayers to say,—
Their sacred vigils e'er to keep.
While huntsmen bold, fierce for the chase,—
Wind loud and clear the bugle horn,
To seek, ere eve draws on apace,
Fox, rabbit, deer, and bounding fawn;
And sportsmen, for light, feathered game,
(As ran the taste,—less arduous toil),
For pheasant, partridge, grouse,—till came
Hour for return, laden with spoil.
While minds more pensive, seek the stream,
With hook and line, for angler's play,—
For speckled fish, that darting gleam,
Bright sparkling, in the sunny ray.
And groups are gathered, here and there,
To list unto some legend old,

Or ballad sung of maiden fair,
Or tale of warrior bravely bold.
Thus, "*Dolce far niente*," life
They happy pass, all, light of heart,
Regardless of the coming strife,
In which each son must bear his part ;—
For are they not all rallied now,
With chief and king to lead again ?
And has not Heaven received their vow
To raise again their fallen Spain ?
And Hope reigns brightly o'er each heart,—
Hope sings again her cheering song
That Victory shall be their part,
And Peace smile on their kingdom long !

Where linger our loved bridal pair,
Who, as the morning brilliant opes,
Shed o'er each heart, their radiance fair
"*Couleur de rose*" of blissful hopes ?—
Too sacred,—deep with holy joy,
Is their heart-love, so pure, I trow,
To gaze therein with rude annoy
For those who ne'er pledged nuptial-vow ;
And those who have, may better tell
From fond remembrance,—the deep thrill

Of rapturous joy, that full did well,
And all their bosom-pulses fill !

Apart they rove in fairy bowers,
As Paradise,—Elysian bright !
On rosy pinions flit the hours,
Till, in the west, now glows the light
Of setting sun, in grandeur proud,
Crimson, in rich fantastic shapes ;
When, in their sanctum,—from the crowd,
They list the note the bulbul wakes,
As heralds she approaching night ;—
And in that calm and sweet retreat,
Glowing with Love's effulgent light,
While rapturous their fond hearts beat,
Speak they of happy future bright,
When, Spain all free from Moslem foe,
Naught in their course but love shall flow !

Sadly, they turn to sorrows sped,—
Still fondly dwell on joys to come ;
When, Discord with the Invader fled,
Sweet Peace shall reign o'er all their home ;
And Love, with fettered pinions, rest
In rosy chains, contented there,—

So happy and supremely blest
Ne'er could he dream of home more fair ;—
Nor would they seek to roam from this
Enchanted spot of sylvan bliss,
Where all breathes of the Heaven above,
And Nature smiles in joyful love,
But, save their country's long felt woes
Call for redress and vengeance sure,
They'd shun all care a court-life knows,
To pass their days 'mid scenes so pure.

Fond breathed his soul its incense sweet,—
The king, his happiness divine,
As gazing in her blue eyes deep,—
“ Mine angel-bride ! mine ! only mine ! ”
Was still the burden of his lay, —
“ Oh ! is it then no dream divine
To sadly fade, and pass away ?—
And art thou, Love, forever mine ?

“ O blessed God ! I pray Thee now
To make me worthy of the prize
Thou givest me in holy vow,
My bride ! mine angel from the skies !
Teach me to guard and cherish e'er,
As Thou wouldst wish, my precious flower ;

Guard Thou ! I pray, with choicest care,
And shield her, through each passing hour !
How may I thank Thee for the boon !—

How worthy prove of this great trust !—
I'll raise Thy Cross 'bove Crescent moon,
The Moslem banner 'crush in dust,
And all the foes of our dear faith

Will scatter to the four winds wide,
Of ' Prophet-creed,' leave not a wraith !—

And this were nothing, for my bride !—
No recompense may e'er suffice

To liquidate my Heavenly debt !
Thou seest the gratitude that lies

In my soul's depths ! ne'er to forget !—
My ardent thanks shall e'er rise up
From gratitude's o'er-flowing cup,—
And this fond heart throb constantly,
In ever-thankful love to Thee !

“ May perfumes from all fairest flowers,
May every breeze that floats on high,
Breathe to Thee, of our happy hours !

Bear Thee each loving, grateful sigh !
May every dew-drop's sun-beam flight
Bear glist'ning tears of joyful love

From gratitude e'er glowing bright,
Pure as the angels know Above !
Let now the bulbul speak to Thee
In her sweet, liquid minstrelsy,
Of my soul-gushing, grateful joy,
My welling bliss, free from alloy !
May earth and air and sky and sea
Sing one eternal song to Thee !
And thus my thanks outspoken be
For this my bride Thou givest me !
Too deep my love, my joy, for speech !—
No words, my holiest feelings reach !
And tremble I, lest all untrue
This wondrous joy ! and from my view
Thou float away—an angel bright,—
Or fade, as some fair dream of night ;
And waken I alone, to mourn !
Of all my fondest visions shorn !
Look on me, Love ! speak ! speak and smile !
Tell me thou art indeed mine own !—
My bride of earth !—no myth, or wile,
To pass and leave me, sad—alone ! ”
Fondly he pressed her to his breast,—
Parted her tresses from her brow,—
Again that brow, her lips, caressed :—
“ Thou art mine own ! I clasp thee now

All palpable and human here !

Enfolded truly in these arms !

My love ! my soul ! my bride so dear,

Glowing with life and radiant charms !—

Oh ! love me ! love me, angel mine !

Take not thy sweet lips once away !

Oh ! let me cling thus e'er to thine !

My bride !—thou canst not say me nay,

Speak ! speak thy love ! and let me hear

If half thou sharest of my joy ?—

Beams earth now to thee newly dear,

Without one saddened, dark alloy ? ”

“ Nay ! nay ! my love ! how may I speak

If kisses stop my words,—my lips !

As flower, in helpless silence weak,

While humming-bird incessant sips !

Nay ! prithee cease ! and I will speak,

As ladies ever would, you know,—

Most cruel ! thus such guard to keep,

Giving no chance for ay or no !

Now cry thee thanks, mine only love !

Gladly respond I to thy soul,—

With thee, I thank our God Above !—

Share I, thy joy and love, the whole,—

Not 'half thy joy'—my life! mine own!

Thou know'st full well—am I not here?

Have I not fled with thee alone?—

Whom have I now but thee, so dear?

How dark, how drear this world to me

Apart from thee, mine own true love

Nay, nay, I could not live from thee!—

Without thee, what were Heaven above?

And 'happy!'—oh! how blest am I!

Thine own loved bride! thine, only thine!—

Ay, brighter far seem earth and sky,—

And fairer still yon moon-beams shine

Than e'er they smiled on me before!

On me, thy happy, happy bride!—

Whom, Love, thou blindly dost adore

While gazing on the brighter side

Of my poor virtues, yet to learn

How weak and frail in all of right,

But rich in love, to thee I turn,

As sun-flower, to her god of light.—

I see no brightness but with thee,

Behold no joy that is not thine,—

Happy, with thee, where'er to be,

And in thy light alone to shine.

And full my chalice-blest of joy,

Dearest, as thine, save that I know

One sad, sad spot of dark alloy.

When thinking, thou must from me go
E'en for a day, to risk thy life,

More precious far than worlds to me!—
In wild and hateful battle-strife,—
Mayhap, forever severed we!”

“Is this my nightingale! my bird!

Chanting such doleful vespers here?—
No mournful notes may now be heard,—
A Chieftain's bride should know not fear!—
Nay cheer thee! cheer thee, gentle one;
A voice, within me, speaks of hope!
Saying,—that ours the victory won!
Successfully, we battle cope!”

Sweetly she turns her dove-like eyes,
To drink, from his, of hopeful joy,
While happier now her fair head lies
Upon his breast, half trust, half coy,—
With mingling sweet, of maid and wife
Of holy feelings, only known
To pure and good, in this earth-life,—
Hearts, where sweet lily-love hath grown.
There, all confiding, fond, and pure,
Reclines she on her lover's breast,

Nestling, of love and honor sure,
Where, as a bird, she'd ever rest.
While fondly plays he with each curl,
So sunny fair, of golden hue ;
Kissing white lids, that sweet unfurl
O'er violet eyes of heavenly blue.—
But list ! soft on the evening air
Come borne upon the breezes bland,
Sweetly, the vesper-tones of prayer,
Full rising from the mountain band ;
When, humbly too, they bend the knee,
In orison, to Deity,
Pure as the twilight dew to rise
In holy incense to the skies.

Now, cooling draughts and fruits most rare
Are placed before our happy pair,
While clear the nightingale's sweet prayer
Still warbling floats through evening air.

CANTO V.

ALL freshly clear and glowing bright
Breaks forth again the morning light ;
Again the orient, glimmering red,
Calls warriors from their mountain bed,
And while the mists rise toward the sky,
Full many a matin wafts on High ;—
While huntsmen, ready for the chase,
Dash forth, on merry mountain race,
Through thicket green, through opening clear,
To seek the roe and bounding deer.
O'er purple heath, at dawning day,
'Through wild'ring paths, they wend their way
Where frightful crags above them bow,
Along wild rocks and ravine's brow,
Then through the copse and chestnut grove
To slacken pace, more quiet rove ;
Where gentle mood induced, they lose
More ardent zest to pensive muse,

Some on their bright-eyed ladye-fair,
Others, in country's woes, thought share.

Brief moments these for tender thought,
A glimpse of tossing antlers caught,
When, loud the hounds and sportsmen cry !
Again the hills and dells reply !
And dashing on, stag, archer, hound,
Once more all merrily they bound,
With yelling bay and arrows' twang,
As speeding on the wild-deer sprang.
Cruel the sport ! not kind the heart
That sends the fatal, death-winged dart,
To lay that beauteous prey all low,
And meet the mild eye's anguished glow,
As sad the upturned, mournful gaze,
Is cast in last expiring haze
Reproachful ! as tho' fain to say,—
Could ye not spare my brief, bright day ?
Why seek ye my free mountain home
Where erst I fearlessly might roam ?—
Or, shielded here, could ye not spare,
And suffer me God's gifts to share ?

But sportsman-heart not oft, I ween,
Is touched by tender conscience keen !

When bugles ring and staunch hounds cry
And swift the springing stag goes by,
No thought, but for the bow true bent,
And whistling arrow surely sent!—
And thus, in huntsman's merry day,
All softer thoughts are cast away.

Now, one by one, as blossoms ope,
 Appear sweet maiden-flow'rets fair,
Bright, as the morn, with love and hope,—
 As radiant, in their beauty rare.
While round the moss-grown Altar-rock,
 To raise the matin hymn on high,
Assembled, range the mountain flock,—
 From cave and forest-sport to hie ;
When swelling on the morning air
 Arises full and rich and free,
With mist and dew in offerings share,
 Their orison of melody,
Day, prayer-begun, all brightly crowned
 With holy aspiration's rays,
That draw from Heaven pure angels round,
 To guard through darkened earthly ways!—
How beautiful the soul's incense !
Borne through empyrean ether hence

Pure wafting to the Heavenly throne !
To God—unaided, and alone !—
No courtly pomp or herald fine
 To sound the name and lead the way,
Unto our blessed Lord Divine ;—
 Whose Gates wide open, night and day,
Stand in their pearly brightness fair ;
 That all may welcome entrance find,—
The high and low alike to share
 His love and wondrous mercy kind !
Oh blessed Gates of peace and light,
 That wearied souls may pass within !
All drooping, worn, through sorrow's night !—
 A glorious morning to begin !
Hark ! as those human voices blend
 In richest harmony of prayer,
The green-wood birds their sweet notes lend
 To fill with praise the morning air ;
Striving as who should loudest swell
 His gratitude to God above,
With gushing joy to chanting tell
 His happiness and praise and love !
The lark gives back his matin high,
While soaring far toward azure sky ;
The robin carols forth his glee
In richest strains of minstrelsy ;

In anthems pure, the warbling thrush
Out-pours his joy from tree and brush ;
While clear, 'mid all, the boblink sings
"Praise God ! praise God !" in note that rings
So full of love and melody,
The sleeping flowers awake to see
The Morning smile !—full time should they
Their incense sweet of perfume pay !
When, blushing bright, the wild-rose red,
Lifts up her richly dew-gemm'd head ;
While sweet the lily, pure and white,
Her chalice opes in glittering light ;
And mountain violets bathed in dew,
Raise their sweet eyes of loving blue,
While blossoms all, awake to share
In grateful offerings, sweet and fair.
Ripple the streams in laughing joy,
And dancing, whirl in playful toy
With every venturous vine and flower
That bends to sip their sparkling shower ;
While loud the torrent joins, to swell
Majestic Praise !—great Nature's bell !
Sounding fore'er with grand accord
The glory of our Sov'reign Lord !

And there were two, whose cup of bliss
Full high o'er-flowed with joys extreme ;—
Whose love-fraught, radiant happiness
Perfected well the glorious scene ;—
Whose joy, too deep for outward tone,
Welled up with full intensity,
Beaming from eyes that glowing shone
With holy love's sweet purity.
Blest couple for that Eden-fair !
To grace and finish well, and light
Their Paradise ;—as earth's first pair,
Ere fell sin's dark and with'ring blight.

Ah ! why so brief all earthly joy ?
Why mixed her chalice with alloy ?
Why may they not thus ever dwell
In fairy bower and sylvan dell,—
In mountain groves far from the world,
Her courts' deceit and treacherous wile,
Or ere War's banner be unfurled,
And dove-eyed Peace so transient smile ?
But cloud not we the present bright
With dark forebodings fraught with woe ;
Nor sing of Sorrow's gloomy night.
While radiant skies around us glow

With rainbow hues of light and love,
And earth so smiles with happiness
Scarce might one deem the realms above
More sweetly, purely, e'er could bless!—
And from this fair Elysian dream
Ne'er would they wish to wake or rise,
So bright does all around them beam!—
A second glorious Paradise!
Take we the moral, then, and see
How chequered-web destroys Life's charm,
Till man would fain from sorrow flee
And earthly strife,—to Heavenly calm!
And were this sphere all bright below,
Without a cloud of Sorrow's night,
Ne'er would the soul with rapture glow,
To plume her wings for Heavenly flight!

Blithe passed the days through dell and vale,
In shady mountain bower;
Each hour might chime a fond love-tale,
Where swayed Love's magic power!
How blithe the king and happy bride!
Roaming o'er flower-decked mountain side,
Culling sweet buds of love and light
With earthly blossoms, e'en less bright!

Blithe as the merry songsters there,
That wake the morn with music rare,—
Chanting till dewy eve of love,—
Blest theme! that angels sing above!

From out their forest bower of joy,
How fair at early morn to hie!
Wand'ring where dancing streamlets toy
With bending shrubs of every dye;
Where bright the rose in dewy sheen,
The wild-rose, creeps amid the green;
Where hawthorn sweet perfumes the air,
And violets hide 'mid green leaves fair,
Peeping, with azure true-love eyes,—
Breathing of love that never dies,—
Whisp'ring from valley, stream, and grot,
To lovers fond,—“Forget me not!”

Now saunter they through olive-dell,—
Now in some fair acacia bower,
Entranced, by Cupid's witching spell,
To dream away the blissful hour.
Oh! with what joy upon his bride
Gazed e'er our royal knight!
The blushing treasure by his side,
His cherished soul's delight!

While fairy "Castles in his Spain"

He rears in thought and speech,
Of prosp'rous days restored again,—

His flower, from danger's reach!—
And, as the clouds of waning day
Roll gorgeous o'er the west,
To their bright bower they wend their way,
For evening's peaceful rest.

How grand that mountain setting sun!

The forest tops, each rocky spire,
The purple cliffs, and torrents run,
Auseva's hills all bathed in fire!
As glowing rich in crimson light,
It blushing bids the earth good-night,
'Mid heavens flecked with every hue
E'er mountain-flower or rainbow knew;
While each gay, tiny, feathered pair,
Seeking the nest 'mid leaflets fair,
Rings out the twilight parting note,
In plaintive cadence far to float;
When sweet again the nightingale
Her song wells forth in joy's delight,—
In liquid notes that through the vale
To moonlight saunter now invite

Fond lovers still to list her tale,
Warbling till dawn of true love bright ;
That when dark clouds of grief assail,
Cheers fonder through the gloomy night.

And there were wanting not, I ween,
The mandolin or light guitar,
And gay bolero on the green,
With chorus-glees that echoed far.—
But list !—the vesper call to prayer !
And from each bower, and grove, and dell,
Warrior and matron, maid repair,
Their holy vows and beads to tell.
While sweetly riseth on the air
Rich swelling tones of voices clear,
Breathing of Praise and earnest Prayer,
Drawing each soul to Heaven more near.
Incense as precious in His sight
As e'er from grandest altar rose,—
That star-gemm'd canopy of light,
Fairer than aught that Seville knows.
And sweeter far the balmy sleep,
Closing each guileless forest day,
Than fevered rest that courtiers reap
From hollow Pleasure's weary way !

So, bright fled the hours, as if Heaven below !
With innocent joys that the world never know ;
In the valley and dell, by the rivulet clear,
With love-beaming eyes smiling ever most dear.
Oh ! the Mountain at sunrise, at sunset, at eve,
Seems more lovely as each in its turn taketh leave ;—
The west, in its crimson, as gorgeous it glows,—
Fair eve when the dew-drop soft kisseth rose,—
And the stars all peep forth in their glimmering
 bright,
With the Moon, their pure queen, in her silvery
 light,—
Her smile's mellow ray, over cliff, vale, and bower,
O'er the water-fall sparkling in diamond shower ;—
And the fond, happy stroll, over heath and wild
 flower,
With the Dear One, whose smile is the light of the
 hour,
Where the aspen-leaf trembles as pulse of the heart,
Vibrating with love, that of life forms a part ;
Where 'the nightingale's song, and the whippowil's
 call,
With the murmuring stream on the ear lulling fall,—
And the breeze, rich with perfume, steals over the
 soul,
Till a dream-like enchantment pervadeth the whole,—

While hearts open full, to expand as a flower,—
Here freely to drink of Divine loving power;—
As the blossom receiveth the pure falling dew,
To bloom still more brightly, and kindly, and true.
Nor star, or fair moon, or sweet flower, ever smiled
So lovely and bright as in this forest-wild,
Where hearts and pure souls, full unclosing in joy,
Quaff Nature's fresh pleasures, all free from alloy.

CANTO VI.

FAIN would my Muse prolong the scene,
Arcadian life,—peaceful and pure,—
But winter follows spring, I ween,
And earthly joys not e'er endure.
'Twere marvel great, if Moorish foe
Their refuge sure, might chance to know,
But for a churl, Fandino hight,
Who base was bought—the caitiff wight !
The Moslem, treacherous to guide
Unto Auseva's mountain side.
Up through the boulder's steep defile,
Their silent march of stealthy wile,
Beneath the raven wing of night,
That screeneth from the Christians' sight,
And vapors dense at dawning hour,
That heavily enclouding lower.

But few brief months, morn's eastern red
Had ushered in with rosy glow,
The day, to love and gladness wed,
When, from the guard that gazed below
Was heard the signal,—“ *Come the foe!* ”
Not with the “ *Leila cry,* ” and gong,
The clarion, and the timbrel shrill—
Not with the “ *Techir* ” battle-song,
But, with a muffled tramp, so still,
So cautious, winding there along,
But for the Watch, for coming ill,
Our Mountain Band might scarcely know
The cunning creeping of the foe!
But, thanks to God and angels fair,
The floating mist divideth there,
Through which bright rays from Heaven fall,
Revealing Arabs, Moslems, all!—
Ay! thrice, kind rays from Heaven's sun
Shine, through the mist, their spears upon,
That gleaming, glist'ning in the light,
Betray the impious sons of night!—
That Turban'd Host of swarthy hue,
As demons seem to Christian view!
Alcahmen, as the Fiend of old,
Leading unto their Eden-fold!

But, God be praised ! pure angels share
Fond, loving guard, for coming snare ;
And Heaven itself, in sunbeams bright,
Looks down to warn them of the fight !
While in that calm, still morning clear,
Comes borne unto the Christian ear,
The muffled tread of Moslem near,
To blanch fair cheeks with pallid fear !

Ah ! now the startling signal ran
From cliff to cave, from man to man !
And corslet, shield, and armor bright,
Are quickly donned for coming fight ;—
Stirring the Camp !—with hasty tread
From ev'ry cave men armèd sped ;—
While helpless matron, maid, and child,
Poured forth their prayers in terror wild,
And noble hearts swelled fiercely bold,
To tremble, in the soft enfold,
The parting clasp of loved ones dear,—
'Mid sobbing tones, and anguished tear.—
With hurried words of tenderness,
And trembling prayers that “ God may bless,”
Were hastening step, and bustling care
For all that falls to battle-share ;

The falchion, spear, and lance, and bow,
The banner, hateful to the foe !—
And sighings heart might scarce endure
From loving ones :—"The Moor ! the Moor !"
From precious lips, and trembling child
All frightened by the tumult wild !—
And sad "*Avè Marias*" brief
From hearts half crazed with fearful grief !
Ay ! many, oft, the matins said,—
By fair and brave to Heaven sped,
That God would smile upon the Band
And bless and save their cherished Land !"

But turn we to our noble King,
And trembling dove beneath his wing ;—
His tender flower !—where shelter find ?—
God temper to his Lamb the wind !
As lily fair upon his breast,
She lies in loving anguish pressed,
Her azure eyes to him upturned,
That now with fear and terror burned
Deep in his soul ! for ah ! the woe !
From his heart's treasure thus to go !—
The madd'ning thought of her sad fate
Chance sacrificed to Moslem hate !—

“Great God!” he cried,—“Oh, hear my prayer!
My love, my bride, my Zillah spare!—
Nor let me fall amid the slain,
But save me, Lord, for her and Spain!—
Hear! hear me, Heaven!” and kneeling there,
Clasping his lily-burthen fair,
Still prayed:—“This flow’ret now I bear,
Grant me yet happily to wear,
And hence, I dedicate to Thee,
To her, and Spain, if need there be,
My sword, my life, my every power,
For this—Thy blessed, Heavenly dower!—
With Followers, and this good right arm,
I’ll strike to shield from grief or harm
The sacred trust Thou givest me;—
And thus,—I seal my pledge to Thee,—
Father in Heaven! her guardian be!”
And on that brow upon his breast,
The seal of love and truth he pressed,
Again, again the loving kiss,
So late bestowed in peaceful bliss!—
Again upon her forehead fair
The kiss,—the cross signed, blessing there,
And severing from that Parian brow
One sunny tress, doth place it now

Upon his heart, whose every beat
Is hers fore'er—where'er to meet,
In Earthly joy—or Heaven above,—
United in Eternal Love.

“My precious one! this sunny charm!
Shall shield thy Love from ev'ry harm;—
A talisman to guard him e'er
From aught of grief, or evil's share!
'*Animo mia vida!*' Thou,
A warrior's bride! may never bow
As drooping lily, white with fear!—
Nay! nay! I'll kiss each coward tear
That trembling in those sweet blue eyes
As dew-drop fair, in violet lies,
And bid them hence, until in joy,
As April's sunny tear-gems coy,
They sparkle bright, with loving beam
In welling happiness to gleam
'Mid rays, that fond with rapture burn
To welcome back thy knight's return.”

More beautiful than flower, I ween,
Those deep blue eyes in tear-drops seen,
Thus opening 'neath his fond caress
In ardent glance of tenderness!

More lovely far than violets seen
Bright peeping through their leafy green,
Those azure orbs, half fringing hid
'Neath the unclosing lily-lid,
With mournful gaze to ope on him,
As well the tear-drops fast, to dim
The sight which e'er to him would turn
While Life's bright light should hold to burn.

Closer unto his breast she clung,
While anguished sobs her bosom wrung ;—
Nestling yet nearer to his heart,
As fain, with him, would life depart.
“Nay ! nay !—ah no !—it may not be !
I cannot live apart from thee !—
Oh ! bear me with thee to the strife !
E'en as thy Page, to yield my life,
Or thou shouldst fall by Moslem-spear,—
And I—O God ! and I not near !—
In battle's rage thou far from me,
And I not there,—to die with thee !—
Oh ! joy upon thy breast to lie !
Oh ! joy e'en thus,—and here to die !
This bosom, refuge sole for me,
So soon 'mid battle dire to be !—

Oh ! could I guard thee, Love, for e'er
From every ill—by constant prayer,
I'd dwell in lowliest hovel poor,—
With thee, all want and care endure !
If but to have thee safe with me,—
From danger, strife, afar to be !
Nor kingdom crave, or regal fame,—
Thy love, and thee, my dearest aim."

" *Angel mio* ! my precious life !
'Twere worth whole years of danger's strife
To know, how thought or price above,
I thus am blessed in thy pure love !—
More, far to me, than diadem,
Or Princely Mass, or Requiem,
The Love-beam from thine angel eye,—
The pure heart-drop, were I to lie
Untimely in the vale below,
O'erpowered by the Moslem foe ;—
Whence I would rise to wait for thee,—
My spirit-bride in Heaven to be !
But no, my Love ! Still happ'ly here
We yet shall rove, in freedom dear,
When Spain, arisen from her night,
Shines bright again, in Glory's light !

But ah ! how sad to leave thee now !—
Thou sweetest blossom on the bough
Of my poor life ! else, naught to me,—
For what were life, deprived of thee ?—
Oh ! I have been so happy here !—
Each moment, more than Kingdom dear
With thee, my light ! e'er by my side
To cheer and bless,—my precious bride !
And, as the brightness fades away,
And dark'ning clouds obscure our day,
The blessed past, as Heavenly dream,
Too bright for earth-life now doth seem !
Oh ! we have dwelt in Eden bowers !
A Paradise, of love and flowers !—
And thou, the Angel fair of light
That beamed o'er all in radiance bright.
And now, I turn, as He of Old,
From Eden bowers of joys untold !—
Turn from my Heaven to dark'ning night,—
The flashing sword ! the fiends ! the fight !

“ But, yet again on Earth shall rise
To us, my love ! in brilliant skies,
Our Star of Hope, and Love, and Light,
To beam o'er all the future bright !

And we will dwell so pure in this
Our earthly sphere of loving bliss,
That when we leave our home of clay,
To spread our wings in Heavenly ray,
Scarce conscious of the wond'rous change,
Will deem we still Auseva range !
Until the Loved Departed bright,
With angel welcome—cheer our sight !
With words that thus in music fall :—
' A God of Love here reigns o'er all,—
Welcome, ye children, pure in love,
To joys eternal here Above ! '—
And thus forever we shall dwell
'Mid bliss that can but angels tell;
For God, our God, shall guard through night
His children pure, to endless light ! ”

But hark ! the signal call—“ To arm ! ”
Oh ! sound of frightful, dire alarm !—
And Gomez, armed,—with lance and spear,
Helmet, and shield, quick draweth near,—
As quickly donned, in toilette brief,
All fully armed, stands now our Chief.
Again, again, in fond embrace
His lips to press on that sad face,—

So pallid in its misery !—
Rigid—in hopeless agony !—
Near madd'ning e'en the thought to part,
Crushing all light from that poor heart !

Again the rallying call,—“ To arm ! ”
With sudden start of wild alarm
She frantic clings to his embrace,
Half frenzied gazing in his face !
“ Nay ! nay ! Pelayo ! hear me ! no !
Thou wilt not—canst not—from me go !
Wouldst have me die ?—or, greater woe !
Become the bride of thy dark Foe ?
Think ! think the fate that must be mine
Shouldst thou thy precious life resign
In Moorish fight !—I, worse than dead !—
By force, to Abdelaïsis wed !—
Oh ! could I now breathe out my life
Here ! here, my love ! or ere the strife
Should Heav'n-ward call thy precious soul,
Where I might wait thee at the goal
Whose ‘ Pearly Gates ’ celestial rise,
Opening the glorious Paradise
Of our blest Home in Heaven above,—
Our home of pure, eternal love !—

Thus would I die upon thy breast!
Where else on earth may I find rest?—
More merciful, the hand to slay,
Than bear me from thy breast away! * * *
Nay! nay! I care not now for ‘pride!’
Let me but tarry by thy side,
Craven, or coward, free to be,
So I but live, or die, with thee!”

“Zillah! mine own! can this so be?
My brave-heart bride, thus counsel me?
The daughter of long lineage brave
Hold back one arm, her land to save?
Breathe softest word one hand to stay
From striking for her ransomed day,
While yet one banner floats o’er head
Where erst the Cross its glory shed!

“That bleeding Country! chained! in woes
Of blackest night!—vile foreign foes
Polluting her with impious faith!—
While, of her glory, scarce a wraith
Remains to wail in mournful tone,—
This is the Land where glory shone!
Where intellect’s rich, glowing fire
Illuming, woke the Pen, and Lyre

Of Bards by Inspiration fed,—
Minds unto deepest myst'ries wed;
Where bright-eyed Peace forever dwelt,
And Christian faith in freedom knelt,—
Where Love illumined Court and Cot,—
None knew the place where he reigned not!
And Mirth and joyful Pleasure wove
A life more bright than ever Jove
Himself could dream, or wish to know;
For in the full, luxuriant flow
Of Spain's fair tide, did Glory beam
Bright as her purest sparkling stream!
And Love, and Light, and Poesy,
And cunning, sweetest Minstrelsy,
All good combined, in harmony
Bright crowned her day, right merrily!
Behold her now!—is there no hand
Will rise to save the fallen land?
Shall I, the Chief of noble band,
All craven shrink to take my stand?
Not-so, my star!—thy smile will light
And cheer me for the coming fight!
But for a moment now we part,
To meet again with lighter heart—
Victorious! from the battle-field
Where Ishmael's sons shall surely yield;

For He, the 'God of Right,' will save
And bless the cause of Pure and Brave ;
And Cross-capped towers shall merry ring
Their joyful peals for Queen and King ;—
And all of Spain, rejoicing cry,—
'Through Him we rise as phoenix high !' ”

As limpid fount returns the beam
Of Luna bright, in cheering gleam,
In her pure soul, full mirrored there,
His sanguine hopes reflected were ;
And brushing back the traitor tear
With her small palm,—“ Hence ! banish fear ! ”
'Mid tearful smiles, she sweetly cried,—
“ For I am now thy worthy bride !
A voice within me seems to say,
Our Spain *shall* rise in glorious day !
And we, 'mid joys no tongue may tell,
Henceforth in love and peace shall dwell !
I feel its truth !—influx Divine !—
That radiant through my soul doth shine,
Dispelling every gloomy fear,
Singing of joyful gladness near !—
I cannot deem this light will last !—
Thou witchest me with magic, cast

From thine own hopes, my noble love!—
Or sure my strength comes from Above!—
As thy brave Queen, I'll with thee now
To list less tender, bolder vow,
In our fair grove, than late we made
Beneath her charmèd leafy shade.
For this is Nature's own retreat,
Where Nature's heart should freely beat;
And thus, I'll bravely near thee bide,—
Until the last—close by thy side.”

Those falt'ring tones belied the word
That, trembling, from her lips was heard,
And wrung his heart!—So sad to see
Hope struggling thus for mastery!—
Within his hands he clasped her own,
And gazing in that angel face,
Where love and fear so sadly shone,
Breathed he a prayer for Heaven's grace
Upon that tender, fragile flower
That ill could breast this stormy hour!—
That God would guard his star of love,
With angels pure, from realms above.—
Again within his arms he clasped
That lovely form,—his bride, his own!

To be, ere moments brief have passed,
Left weeping, helpless, here alone!—
Sadly, a ling'ring look,—the last,
Around his bower of bliss he gave,
As round her form his arm he passed,
And forth departed from the cave
Unto the Circlet Grove, where now
Were gath'ring fast a motley band,
The humble prayer and solemn vow
To offer for their fallen land.
The hoary sire and warrior strong,
Maid, matron, children, haste along;
With less of happy joy, I ween,
Than that which welcomed King and Queen!

Hushed now each sound of joy or glee,
Where smiles then played,—the tear we see—
In loving eyes, from whence the light
Sad dimmed, in drooping terror's fright!
They come! that noble Mountain Band!
The Laurel Circlet, 'round to stand;
Women and children,—chieftains all,
Assembled by the rallying call.

In silence all they gather round—
Naught breaks the stillness, so profound,

Save rustling of the aspen leaf,
Or stifled sob of woman's grief!—
With twitt'ring of each forest bird,
And choral matins, sadly heard,—
And om'nous sound of torrent's pour
In deep, and heavy, threatening roar.

Around the Altar, rev'rent now,
Urban, Centerio, Friars bow;
When forth advancing speaks their Chief:—
“Brave Sons of Spain! the moments, brief
Ere in the ravine's depths below
Meet we Alcahmen with the foe!—
Chiefs! Warriors! now it rests with ye
Our Spain—our fettered Land to free!
They come in hosts, that swarthy Horde!
Dark'ning, as locusts swarm, the plain;
But we have on our side the Lord,
To whom we may not call in vain!
And Spirits of the Brave on High,
Above the blue empyrean sky,
In breathless, holy prayer, await
The Contest,—and our coming fate!
Shades of the Blest! who for your Land
Fell nobly! slain! a martyred Band!

For you, and for our Country now,
Vengeance all deep we solemn vow !—
Look, from your holy, starry height,
All prayerful, on the coming fight ;
Guard and protect our Band from ill,
And thus your Heav'nly mission fill
As ' Ministering Angels ' fair,
That in your Country's woes take share ;
To guard, sustain her children brave,
And through directing Influence—save !

“ Warriors and Chiefs ! what say ye now ?
Shall Christians, tamely fettered, bow
To dogs and Infidels accurst ?
No ! in God's name, those chains we'll burst !
And vengeance hurl on each vile son !—
Nor cease until full victory won ;—
Till high our Cross shall float above,—
Peace, o'er our borders reign in love !—
What say ye ? Stand ye ready all
Now at your Country's desp'rate call ?
Here on this Shrine take ye the oath
To strike for God and Country both ?
While yet one arm may wield its spear
Onward to press with bravest cheer ?

Strike! strike for Vengeance and our Land!
Your wives and homes!—Swear ye, my Band?"

"*We swear!*" doth one full tone resound,
And bow they all, that Shrine around,—
While bright blades rest they solemn there
Upon the flower-decked Altar fair.

"Nobles and Chiefs!" he still pursued,
 "Theodmir—Pedro—Leaders here;
Our God Spain's suff'rings long hath viewed,
 And now,—for vengeance draweth near!—
His Cross to raise—our Land to save;
To bless the Pure, the Good, and Brave,
For where His Banner Christians bear,
The Lord will not be absent there!
I fear not for ye, one and all,
E'er dauntless in your Country's call;
The duties now devolved on ye,
In your past deeds have surety!
Well tried are ye—not wanting found,—
To God and noble deeds e'er bound!
This day, again ye take the Vow,
To lead where Honor calleth now;
Hold forth each brave and well-tried sword,
And, in the name of our blest Lord,—

Promise ye still to lead aright
For God and Spain, in this day's fight,—
Until the base Invader's blood
Shall stain the glen, or tinge yon flood!"

Bright flashed each blade, as forth it sprang!
As Master's honor, clearly rang
Upon the Altar pointed there,
While, with unfalt'ring voice—" *We swear!*"
Rose full upon the morning air,—
"For Spain and Vengeance! here we swear!—
Auseva and Asturia! now,—

Ye native streams!—Earth, air, and sky!
Bear witness, while we solemn vow,

In Spain's dear cause to bravely die;—
Never to league with foe accurst,
But from her chains untrammelled burst;—
To wage perpetual, vengeful war
From north to south, from shore to shore,—
Till not one living foe remain
To blight the soil of our loved Spain.

We swear!"—while all clear said and felt—
"Amen! Amen!" Then, lowly knelt
Father and son, maid, wife, and child,—
All prayerful in that Mountain-Wild!

Upon the Altar's base in prayer
Our King and Queen take humble share ;—
Encircling them, Priests, Fathers grey,
Pleading for Spain's victorious day.
And offered now, is Solemn Mass,
Ere yet to Combat dire they pass—
All shriven, souls from earthly sin,
That death, or freedom soon may win !
And holy Eucharist is given
Ere yet, mayhap, earth-cord be riven !

Before that Altar, grave and calm
Urbino standeth,—in his palm,
Upraised, an Ilex cross doth bear,
While blessing all assembled there.

“ *Now, Benedicat vos, I pray,*

Pater et Filius, Divine,

Omnipotens Deus, for aye,—

Et Spiritus Sanctus—Amen.”

With Cross still clasped, thus kneeling there,
He raised his eyes toward Heaven in prayer—
While all, with close-crossed arms, low bent,
In humble supplication, knelt :—

“ Our Father ! Lord of Heaven ! behold
In Thy dear cause Thy Sons enrolled !

Oh! deign to lend a pitying ear
Unto our prayerful offerings here!"

P R A Y E R .

Great Father of the Mountain!
God of its crowning cloud!
Great wielder of the lightning,
And of the thunders loud!
Who colorest fair the rainbow,
And gildest sunbeams bright,
Who speakest in the torrent's flow,—
Who said,—“Let there be light!”—
Who drapest earth with verdure,
Rich groves, and luscious vine,
And lavest the green herbage,
With streamlets' silvery line;
Who ridest on the whirlwind
And 'mid the tempest storm,
Dost waters of the deep, bind,
And bud and blossom form;
Who dwellest in the lily's breast,
And giv'st the rose its hue,
Dost 'mid the perfumed violets rest,—
Distillest sweetest dew,—

Who tingest bright the eastern sky,
When Morn leads in her train,
With tints that in fair sea-shells lie,
Or gems from India's main,
As riseth in his royal pride,
Great Sol,—Thine orb of light,
With warming, cheering ray to glide
Through clouds of fleecy white.—
Blest Lord ! who dost that orb direct
Throughout thine heav'nly skies
Of azure clear, all snowy flecked,
Till daylight fading dies
In gorgeous hues of sunset glow,
Gilding the glowing west,
Where rainbow clouds fantastic flow
As sinks that orb to rest.—

Father ! in whose ethereal sky
Thy myriad stars of brilliant ray,
As diamond lights, pure gleaming lie,
Until in morn they fade away ;—
Great God ! who givest beauteous moon
To gladden skies through night's dark hour,—
To lovers fond a blessed boon !—
Smiling o'er radiant heart, as bower ;

Thou, Lord ! who dost that orb of night
So glorious, place in ether clear,
Jehovah ! Father ! Lord of Light !
Deign now, our Orison to hear !

Look from Thy starry throne
Down upon our sorrow ;—
Hear humble prayer and moan
For a brighter morrow !
Bless Royal Queen and King,—
Spaniard's hoped salvation,—
Soon may the pæan ring
Victory ! for our nation !
Hear, while we bend to Thee,—
Creatures of Thy moulding,—
Aid, Cross and Land to free
From her ashes smould'ring !—
May she rise in power again,
As Phœnix erst in story ;—
Spain resound with one refrain
Of re-illumined glory !
Give us victory o'er the foe,—
Protect each son and daughter ;
Save us, Lord, from captive woe !—
Base bondage—worse than slaughter !

Better far, these forms all low,
Still, in death were sleeping,
Than, 'neath yoke of Moslem foe,—
Wives and daughters weeping!—

Spare our wives and children, Lord!
Loved ones, whom we leave with Thee;
Spare! oh! spare them from the horde!
Captured,—slaughtered should we be.
Save us, Lord! nor let us fall,
God, our Father! be our stay;
Guard Thy suff'ring children all,—
Grant to Spain a brighter day
When her banner proud shall wave
O'er each wall and fortress height,
While rejoice each Fair and Brave,
In the rays of Glory's light!—

Hear, now, our Prayer and Vow!
List our Refrain;
Hear, Lord! in mercy, Thou!
Save! save our Spain!

C H A N T .

Father of the Mountain,
God of the Vale and Hill,

Father of the Fountain,
Of Streamlet, Lake, and Rill.
Father of the Wild-wood,
Of Heath, and Grove, and Plain,
God of the raging Flood,
Great Ruler of the Main.
Father of each Bird and Flower ;
Commander of the Storm,
Giver of the Summer Shower,
Creator of each Form ;
Father of the Moon and Sun,
The Author of each Star,—
Wond'rous all Thy Works !—“ *Well done,*”—
On Earth—in Heaven afar !

Father of all pure Angels bright
In Blessed Realms above ;—
Creator of each Day and Night,—
God of all Truth and Love.
Father of every Mercy kind,
Supreme ! in Goodness great !
Who tempers to the lamb the wind,—
We, at Thy footstool wait !—

Dear Father ! God ! Jehovah !
Hear ! while we humbly bow ;—

Blest Saviour ! Thou, our Guide-Star,—
List now our Prayer and Vow !—
Lord, we place our trust in Thee,
May we now victorious be
O'er the foe, and every sin,
Till Thy Heavenly Courts we win !

As breathed its cadence last that prayer,
Forth from the grass, through morning air,
A Lark soared high with dew-gemm'd wing,
And note, as omen bright, to ring !—
Piercing the skies, as though to bear
That pure, soul-offered matin-prayer
To Heaven's own Court on pinions light,
And carol back her answer bright !

Rise they from humble praying
With courage, strength anew ;
Each man his sabre swaying,
Toward Heaven, with ardor true.

The King, before the Altar,
Majestic stands in view,—
Cries,—“ Spaniards ! never falter !
But die, or bravely do ! ”

His regal sceptre waving—

“Now Vengeance to the Foe,
Our Land and Homes invading!

Woe to the Moslem! woe!—
One day of fighting glorious,
And craven, Moorish horde,
Shall, by our arms victorious,
Fall low beneath our sword!

“Forward! forward to the fight!

Draw for Liberty and Right!

For our Loved—whose prayers will rise

’Bove the fray to Heav’nly skies.—

While the dark invading foe,

Swarm as fiends our vale below,

Remember—God doth guard above,

And I, your King, lead on in love.—

Forward to the impious foe!—

Who shunneth fray, wins death or woe!—

Honor to the brave in fight!—

God bless our Cause with Glory bright!

“For God! and Spain receiving

Your loyal plighted vow,

I bid you to your wreathing

Of glorious laurels now!”—

With arms upraised extending,
He blessed his Mountain Band,—
“Go forth—Spain’s Cause defending—
Your Cross—and Native Land!”

Glowed forth his soul with ardor bright,
Illuming face and form,
Beaming with Inspiration’s light,—
With Heavenly Influence warm!
While, wond’rous sight! an Eagle there
Wheeled round and round above in air,
Nearer and nearer o’er his head!
Then, soaring high, toward heaven sped!—
At this, the superstitious crowd
Would fain have shouted wildly loud,
But for this order rigid passed:—
“Strict silence keep till Bugle blast!”—
Thus, they subdued their gladness’ show;
“Blest Omen!” breathe in joy-tones low,—
“The Bird of Victory descends
And proudly o’er our Sovereign bends!
Ah! Moslem dark! bide we our day!
Nor long the Avenging hand will stay,—
Thy voice shall rise in unthought fear,
When e’en thine ‘*Allah!*’ may not hear!”

“No loud exclaim,” had said the King,—
“No sabre raised, no clarion ring
*Till Signal pass!—until the foe
Hath neared ‘St. Mary’s Cave’ below.*
With force unequal in the strife,
’Twere folly e’en to lose one life
Needless, while yet we may endure,—
Ere neared the Bridge, when, Victory sure,
Once well within our deep ravine,
The Moorish foe will scarce, I ween,
Find outlet, or escape from harm,
While yet may rise one Spanish arm!
And well they ken, that ill may cope
That Arab horde! in battle scope—
Through ravine’s depths, o’er rocky height,
With mountaineers, in desp’rate fight!—
But deem they, that, Asturians, we,
All crushed, for refuge, hither flee;
And thus, through stealthy, sly advance,
Surprised, by sudden zel and lance,
We needs, in craven fear, must yield;—
Each Holy Banner, sword, and shield,
And life itself, to Moslem fall,—
Or on their ‘*Allah Prophet*’ call!
So, silent all—impatient none;—
Cautious—and ours the victory won!

Calmly await—till, in yon glen,
Our Cross have passed those turban'd men,—
Until my Bugle note shall sound,
And full the 'signal' pass around,
From Chiefs to Men—*Now, in the name*
Of God! for Vengeance! and our Spain!—
'Santiago y clena España!'

Well up through the ravine's dark side;—
'Santiago y clena España!'

Ring forth o'er the mountain-tops wide!"

Now, risen from the blessing
Of him, their Chief and King,
Their joy but scarce repressing
To see that eagle-wing
Out-spread, as though caressing,
And shelt'ring their loved Chief!—
As harbinger of blessing
From Heaven—in their belief!

Now toward the King, Urbino came,
With Crucifix and incense-flame,—
To wave around the royal head
Blest perfume, from the Censer shed.
Raising his hand, he solemn spake,—
"As servant of our Lord, I take

Prerogative of Holiness,
In His dear Name, thee, King, to bless ;—
May His Right Arm be with thee still
To guard and save from every ill ;—
May Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Bless thee, my son, and all our Host ! ”—
Riseth the King from solemn prayer,
Embracing fond the Prelate there ;—
“ Thanks, Holy Padre ! firm my oath,
I keep for God and Country both ! ”
Then, turning to his Mountaineers,—
“ Our Vow, our Prayer, great Heaven hears !
Each, faithful to his solemn trust,—
And God, our God will bless the just !

“ Now, Warriors, for a brief farewell
To those most dear—then to the dell : ”—
And turning, seeks the Chief his Fair
On Osier Throne reclining there,—
With “ Liege-Ladyes,” no longer bright,
But drooping, as pale flowers of night,
Bedewed in tears for Love and Sire,
Departing for the battle dire !—

“ To those ye love ! ” sad spake the Chief,
“ For moments each, but few and brief !—

We would alone ;—ere flits the hour
Await thy Queen within her bower.”—

“Nay ! nay ! I prithee say not so !

Unto the Cliff with thee I go !

Thou’lt bear me hence ? Mine own dear lord !

This parting boon thou wilt accord ?

Ne’er could I bide within that bower,

Where we have passed each blissful hour !—

’Twould madden me with fearful fright,

While thou wert struggling in the fight ! ”

“Sweet love ! thou ne’er couldst bide that sight !

My tender flower ! born for the light !

But ill could brook the stormy wrath

So soon to sweep our mountain path ! ”

“Yes, well thou say’st ‘Light is for me,’

Who know’st my light is but with thee !

Together, midnight, noon to me !

And light and life, alone with thee !—

I will not, dearest ! ” mournfully she said,

While from his breast she raised her drooping
head,

Gazing with anguished look upon his face,

“I will not blench, or fail to chase,

So strength be spared, each sign of fear,

If to the last I bide thee near !—

Each golden moment ere we part
E'en as the life-drops of my heart !—
Deny me not, I pray thee ! this
Sole shadow of departed bliss !
These precious moments ! chance the last
On earth together to be passed !
And I may with thee, dearest ! now,
Unto the Cliff,—the ravine's brow ?
Thou'lt see, I'll nobly bear me up,
And bravely quaff my bitter cup ! * *
Nay ! nay ! the bower is not for me,
Save there together, love, we be !—
Why, have not I as brave a soul
As women, children, there the whole ?
Less loving I than each fond wife
Who there may watch throughout the strife ?—
Now, shame upon my womanhood,
If I, thy Queen ! bear heart less good,
Loving, or strong, or brave, or kind,
Than 'mid our people we may find !
Fear not for me !—Ah ! would that strife
Were o'er !—thou here again, my life !
And I, upon thy precious breast,
Thus ever, evermore might rest !
Or thus to die !—exhale my life,
Ere parted for this horrid strife !

Pass to Eternal, Heavenly birth,
Ere severed thus!—thus here on earth!
My God! my God! oh! spare Thou mine,
Mine only love! my light! to shine
Around these paths,—in our loved bower;—
Spare! spare my soul the midnight-hour!—
Let not his raven-wing Death ope,
Crushing all joy, and life, and hope!—
That hideous plume of night o'er-spread!—
My light and hopes, all shaded! dead!”

Closer unto his heart he drew
That precious form,—as though he too
Must die ere leave his flower alone,
As blossom sweet by tempest blown!—
“ Mine angel one, and *should* this be,—
To thee my spirit still must flee;—
Still, ever fondly guarding thee!
Thine! thine Above! eternally!
For oh! my life! thou knowest well,
Better than e'er vain words may tell,
The torture wringing my poor heart,
Each pulse, each chord, from thee to part!—
But honor, duty, bid me on;—
And thou wilt offer when I'm gone

Thy pure-breathed Orisons, my love !
For him thou lov'st, to God above ;
And thus, I'll know my Zillah prays !—
The shaft of ill and danger stays,
Through intercession, purely given,
For one unworthy, unto Heaven !—
Ay, sweetest love ! should prayer be vain,
And we on earth ne'er meet again !
If Souls may from the world above
Return to linger where they love,
My spirit will be near thee still
To loving shield from every ill,
Until thy soul shall take its flight
To realms of pure, angelic light !
When, to the bowers of Paradise,
Together we will fondly rise !
One, loving, true, duality,
United for Eternity !—
And 'chance I fall,—my Chiefs will be
Guardians most true and kind to thee,—
In each, in all, thou'lt ever find,
Brother, and friend, and parent kind, * *
Nay ! list ! 'twas but of chance I spake—
Not yet my life the sword shall take ;—
In earthly bowers, we yet shall share
Together joys and blessings rare.

Now, all good Saints protect thee, sweet!
Until in Victory we meet!—
God! and all Angels, guard thee well;
My love! my bride! my life! farewell!”
Oh! sadly anguished, fond caress!—
So full of love and wretchedness!—
Dark'ning the light from that poor heart!—
Rending its chords,—thus, thus to part!—

* * * * *

Oh! then, and there, was parting,
That wrung the loving heart!
And bitter tear-drops starting,
As ran the sound—“*Depart!*”

CANTO VII.

UPON the Cliff, assembled there
King, Queen, and Chieftains of the band,
Mother, and child, and maiden fair,
With Warriors, gathered stand.—
While in St. Mary's giant cave,
Just at the closing of the glen,
Are waiting, Warriors boldly brave,
Their culled and choicest Mountain men ;
And here and there, where rocks jut far,
Watchers for warning mounted are,
All vigilant, with eye intent
Upon the chasm keenly bent.
Eager and burning for the fight,
Brave, stalwart mountaineers await
The Foe approaching nearer sight,—
All unappalled,—nor fear their fate !—

In silence all,—save murmured word
Of tenderness, and love, and hope,—
And quiet, martial orders heard,
How in the coming fray to cope.

Oh! what a shade of serious joy
Reigned o'er that Monarch's face!—
A light of love, and sad alloy,
That mingling there held place!—
All tenderly his glances fell
Upon his flow'ret near,—
Then, with dire fierceness on the dell,
The Moslem tramp to hear!
Around him, standing Chieftains bold,—
Theodmir, tried in battles old,
Pelistes, Pedro, with him now
Upon the mossy ravine's brow,—
And Gomez, faithful, at his side,
With throbbing zeal to scarce abide
The laggard moments, far too slow!
His burning valor fierce to show.

Upon a knoll our Bishops knelt,
Constant each rosary to say,—
Their orisons, deep and soul-felt,
For strength throughout the coming fray.

The morning sunlight kissed each spire
Of flinty rock, in crimson fire,
High o'er the Ravine's darksome way,
Where fell dense shadows, grim and grey,
That deeper, darker, narrower grew
'Mid beetling crags rude passing through,
Dark chasms by the torrent rent,
Through years of rushing fury spent.

Enshrined now, as some fair bride
In fleecy veil of white,
Around the boulder'd mountain side
Hung curling vapors light,
As erst to Israel's Host was given
A cloud of misty light,—
All kindly sent by gracious Heaven
To shield from Moslem sight.
But well the Christians know the tread,
Faint echoing from below !—
The muffled, measured, tramping dread,
Of the invading Foe !—
And well they mark, our warrior-men,
Each point they're passing in the glen,
E'en through that cloud !—but now a ray
Of sunlight falleth on their way !

And soon the light, dispersing mist,
That on earth's bosom lies,
Gently, Auseva's brow hath kissed,
To floating heaven-ward rise :
When lo ! from snow-flecked azure skies
Gleameth Morn's sunlight down,
Deep where the chasm's shadow lies
Beneath the bowlders' frown,
Revealing banners waving,
'Mid glitt'ring lances' sheen,
Where Deva's stream is laving
Her ilex branches green !

And Rabenal and Foncebadon,
Far in the west that lay,
As through the mist breaks forth the sun,
Their giant forms display.
While, toward the north, 'mid bright'ning skies,
The land they love so dear !—
Where the Erbesian Mountains rise,
'Mid vapors floating clear.

But nearer still advance the Foe
Toward the blessed Cross below ;—
A strange, unseemly, hideous mass !
All stealthy, winding through the Pass !

“The Moor! the Moor!” the vale below
Is teeming with white turban’d Foe!—
No cymbal clang, or atabal
Wild warning give, or ear appal;—
No “*Allah Mah’met!*” battle-cry
To tell the tale of Moslem nigh,—
No kettle-drum, or gong-peal fell,
With “*Lelie cry*” and “*Techir yell!*”
But slyly, stealthy thread they way,—
While, oft, anon, a heavenly ray
Pierces the chasm’s depth, to show
Their wily creeping now below!—
And as the oaken Cross they pass,
That unbelieving Foe!
The King, amid that silent mass,
One warning note doth blow
From silver bugle at his side,
All clear, but soft and low;
Well heard on upper Mountain wide,
But reaching not the Foe.

“Now, in the name of Heaven!
For ‘*Vengeance, and our Spain!*’—
Men, see your chains be riven,
Our war-cry not in vain!”

From crag to crag the Signal passed,—
Each voice subdued, to tell,—
From Warrior's prattling boy, the last,
That Signal lisping fell !—
Now peals that shout from rear to van !
Rings forth as one from ev'ry man !
High o'er the hill-tops far and wide,
Echoing adown the ravine's side !
And well, I ween, it startling fell
On Moorish ears within the dell !—
Who thought to steal upon their prey,
Surprise !—with easy conflict slay !—
“ They come !—The Moslem come ! ” the cry,—
And, as fierce lightnings, glist'ning fly
From out the sheath each glitt'ring sword,—
Flashing as one, at given word !

How gazes on his bride the King !
With look that tells how grief doth wring
That bosom where he clasps her now !
Pressing fond kisses on her brow,
In last, last lingering embrace !—
Love over all things bearing place
When mingling souls breathe out their sighs,
Speaking of Love that never dies,—

Telling of true affection's power,
That triumphs e'en o'er Azrael's hour!—

“*Adios* Zillah! Zillah mine!—

To God! to God I thee resign!—

Spare! spare us, Lord, to meet again,

Rejoicing in our love and Spain!—

Again farewell, my life! again!”

One moment in his clasp she lay!

“Now—‘*Vengeance! Victory! and Spain!*’”—

Another!—he has passed away!—

As statue there, she stands to view!

So fixed, so Parian white in hue!

As though all life had with him fled,

Leaving no tear of woe to shed!—

So fixed on him those azure eyes,

As down the Cliff he eager flies,

With wildly loving gaze so true,

Till 'neath the crags he's lost to view!

Then, back, bewildered, from her brow

Those sunny ringlets throwing now,

While toward the Glen turned every eye,

She to the Cross doth trembling fly,

Where, sooner, nearer she may view

Him whom she loves so wildly true,

And 'neath the sacred Symbol there
Breathe forth her anguished soul in prayer.

“My God!” she cries,—“Oh! save my Love!—
Look Thou in mercy from Above!—
Christ! Christ our Saviour! listen now
While thus beneath thy Cross I bow!

“*Ave Maria!* for thy child
Intercede, O Madre mild!—
Heavenly Father! Saviour dear!
To Thy suppliant one draw near!

“*Ave Maria!* Madre mild,
Pity now thy suff’ring child!
Ora Madre! for us pray,—
For my Love throughout the fray!

“Father! Saviour! look below,
Save us from the Moslem foe!
Grant the victory ours this day,—
Hear me, while to Thee I pray!

“Heavenly Father! through Thy Son
Listen to Thy suppliant one;
Mercy! mercy for my Love!
Save him, God in Heaven above!”

Quick down the Mountain-side they rush
From cliff to crag, o'er rock, through brush,
As light deer fleet, on sporting day,
Or wild beasts, eager for the prey.
While screams the eagle, soaring high,
As on their maddened course they fly,—
The Mountain-side fierce dashing down
Where beetling rocks o'er ravines frown ;—
From boulders huge they bounding sprung,
For vengeance ev'ry sinew strung !
On ! rushing toward the coming Foe !—
And now they reach the vale below ;—
And calm before St. Mary's Cave
Pelayo stands—majestic—brave !—
Theodmir, Odear, nobles, wait
The crisis,—and their coming fate !—
An oaken Cross before them raised,
On which, 'mid golden mottoes, shone—
“ Jehovah ! God ! be ever praised ! ”
In brilliant letters set thereon.
And broad the “ Bannered Lion ” waves,—
And crimson pennons float ;—
While dauntless wait the assembled Braves
The Conflict's signal-note !

Riseth now the bugle-call—
“Ready! Christian Warriors all!
Lo! invading foes appear!
Strike! for Cross and Country dear!”—
Now approach the dark array,
Swarthy Moslems cloud the way!
Rise “*Techir*” shout and tymbalon,
The tambour-peal and cymbalon!
Riseth shrill the “*Techir yell!*”
“Lelie Faith-cry” from the dell;
As all demons loose were sent!—
With that cry, their fury blent!—

From man to man Spain’s war-cry rose,—
“*For God, and Vengeance on our Foes!*”—
Mingling in one tumultuous roar,
That every hill-top echoing bore;
They come! they come! our Mountain-men!
Forth how they issue through the glen!
With glitt’ring lance and warrior-tread,
By brave Pelayo nobly led;
Mounted upon his charger white
While on his breast-plate gleameth bright
A silver cross,—as ever bore
Don Roderick, in days of yore.

His snowy plume, from helmet bright,
Floats as a cloud of fleecy white ;
While following close, with glist'ning flash
From shields of steel, his warriors dash !—
Hark ! the shout and battle cry
Ringing up the Chasm high !
“ *God ! Santiago ! Vengeance ' now !*
Spaniards ! by your Faith and Vow !
For Vengeance and our Country's right !
By our Faith and Symbol bright,
Dash the brazen Crescent low !
Death unto the impious Foe ! ”

“ *Santiago ! y clena España !* ”

Up, up, through the ravine, doth sound,
“ *Santiago ! y clena España !* ”

O'er the Mountain doth clearly resound !

Now they pause in deadly stand !—
Christians, and the Moorish band !—
Ceased, the heavy tramp of wrath,—
Ceased, as storm on forest-path !—
And all is calm,—a frightful hush !—

As wild beasts pause before their prey
In fiendish glare ! ere yet they rush
With raging fury, fierce to slay !—



Hark! the shout and battle-cry
Ringing up the chasm high!
“‘God! Santiago! Vengeance’ now!
Spaniards! by your Faith and Vow!”

Now, level lance, and spear, and bow !—

A measured scanning of the Foe !

The Moorish yell ! the Christian cry !

“ *Vengeance ! For God ! and Spain to die !* ”

“ *Alla Akbar !* ” and “ *Alla il Alla !* ”

Pierce shrill ’bove the cymbal’s loud clang !

“ *Santiago y clena España !* ”

Brave Christians re-echoing, rang !

Rushes now Pelayo, fleet

On his charger, fierce to meet

Alcahmen in full career,—

In whose breast he drives his spear,

Striking sure, with warrior-craft,—

Piercing him with deadly shaft !—

From his war-steed thus doth fall

Alcahmen in Azrael’s thrall !—

Smiting, slaying, through the mass,

Fierce, Pelayo maketh way !

While beneath his with’ring pass

Moslem tyrants falling lay !—

Arab and Moor ! as though the God

Of Vengeance wrought through him

To fell the Oppressor ’neath His rod,—

The eye of Rapine—dim !

Close they in wild combat fierce,
'Mid sabre's clash and arrow's pierce !
As meteors, flash the war-spears there !—
Oh ! hideous sight, that battle glare !—
The deadly fight of man with man !—
The fiend-like rushing of each van,—
The whirl, the thick'ning, dusky air,
As to and fro wild chargers tear !—
And foreign shout and Christian call,
'Mid javelins' cleave,—and riders' fall !—
And shiv'ring lance, and helmets' crash,
With crossing spears, and sabres' clash !—
The buzzing twang and arrow's hiss,
From aim too sure to failing miss,—
And ringing buckler, sword, and lance,
As horse and rider wild advance
To reel beneath the javelin hurled,
'Mid tossing banners, pennons curled,
And fierce collision raging there,
As though all fiends the combat share !

Proudly, the Rampant Lion waves
Its folds, that breeze of morning laves !—
Heard foreign tongues in jargon round,
While impious oaths o'er hills resound.

Nobly, our Christians bore them then !
Bravely, the Mountain Warrior-men !—
While foremost e'er the King appeared,
With waving plume and lance upreared ;
And on his breast that cross e'er seen
Glist'ning with pure and hopeful sheen,—
Anon, and now to brighter flash
With rushing charger's furious dash.

Now in the gorge grows fierce the fight
Beneath the gaze of loving sight !
Wives, maids beloved, and children dear
Together grouped in pallid fear,—
All save our Queen,—who, wild with fright,
Alone still gazes on the fight ;
Alone, still prayeth for her Love
Beside the Cross, upraised above
The scene of conflict, high in air ;
Offering her holy, anguished prayer
Beneath its shelter there alone,
For life, more precious than her own ;—
And thus, while through the gorge he passed,
As toward the Cross a glance he cast,
Beholds the King his more than life,
As Angel pure, to guard through strife !

Clinging unto that Symbol bright,
As some blessed spirit draped in light!—
His own pure Star of hope, so fair,
Amid the clouds enshrined there!—
Her white robes flutt'ring in mid-air,
Her lily-hands outclasped in prayer,
One sunny ray on her pure brow,
As thus she beams upon him now!
Ay! lovely she, as spirit bright,
Gazing from off that Cross-crowned height—
Her golden hair, loose, unconfined,
Fair streaming to the mountain wind!

In loving rev'rence raised he high
His sword, to meet her searching eye;
Pressing one hand to his fond heart,
Where, as his life-blood, bore she part!—
“God bless thee!” cries she, “for that sign!
With life alone, may we resign,
And not e'en then, the soul-deep love
That must live on in worlds above!”
And, in mute signal, she too prest
One hand upon her throbbing breast,
While on the Cross the other lies,
As still her prayer doth Heaven-ward rise!

A step!—and Inez breathless there!
“O ladye dear! my sovereign fair!”
Exclaiming quick, in anxious tone,
“And art thou grieving here alone!
Forgive! forgive! that ’mid the mass,
I marked thee not, when thou didst pass!
My look was but one moment drawn
Toward the Glen,—when thou wert gone!”
“Full pardon, Inez,—it is naught;
Alone to leave the cliff I sought,—
And stole me here the fray to see,
Where, by this Cross, alone I’d be!”

“Prithee, ladye, rest not here,
This is no sight for thee;
God will preserve thy Liege so dear,—
But here thou should’st not be!”

“Nay, Inez, nay, fear not for me,
A dauntless Chieftain’s bride!
Nay, here alone my place should be,—
Still here I must abide.—
But list thee! Hark! My Liege-love’s voice!
Around him how they rally,
Of Spain’s brave sons the proud and choice,
From mountain-height and valley!

Lo! his gallant bearing there!
Jove-like, in his splendor!
Now just Heaven in mercy spare
Thy children's brave defender!
List thee! list thee! how they cry,
While around they rally!—
'King! for Spain and thee we die!
Fearless, onward sally!'
Behold! how nobly leads he on!
My gallant, bold and brave!
Who for our glory,—well nigh gone!
Would die to guard and save!
Ha! now rush the turban'd horde
With crescent, cymar flashing!—
Save! oh! save him, Heavenly Lord!
From foes,—as demons dashing!"

Scarce breathed her brief but ardent prayer,
When, by that pure earth-child,
Her Angel Mother standeth there
In Heavenly radiance mild!
Unseen by her—but far below,
A startling sight! I ween,
To *one* among the impious foe,
That Cross, thus guarded seen!

The Father!—foremost 'mid the van,

Count Eudon! turban'd there!

Apostate! renegado man!

In Moorish cause to share!—

The wife beloved, to Heaven called,

The daughter from him fled,

Beholdeth he, now sad appalled,

As Angels from the Dead!

Beside the sacred Cross, which he

Hath base abjured, so cravenly,

Life and possessions vast of Spain,

Most haplessly still to retain!

And thus, approaching with the foe,

Breaks on his view from vale below,

The Holy Cross, so blest, that he

Had revered from his infancy,

Uplifted high and glist'ning bright,

While on each side, most fair,

An Angel standeth, clothed in light!

Two Angels watching there!

Well doth Count Eudon know that pair—

His child and angel wife!—

Deeming both sent from Heaven there

To warn him from the fight!

And all who raised to Heaven the eye,
Took comfort from that sight,—
Glist'ning, on jutting cliff so high,
That Cross—with angels bright
On either side enrobed in white,
As guardian seraphs there,—
That Christians in that desp'rate fight
Might hopeful comfort bear.—
How like the two in visage fair,
In gentle, graceful mien,
In azure eyes and golden hair—
As on that Cross they lean!

Why starts that child? what meets her eye?—
From out the Moslem bands
Springs forth a Chief, with arms tossed high
Wild pointing where she stands!
As though well nigh in terror mad!
Transfixed! or changed to stone!—
E'en to that child, his anguish sad
Is plainly, clearly shown!—
Then, fiercely from his turban'd head
The hateful badge he rent—
To vengeful cast beneath his tread
The crescent, hurling sent

Down in the dust,—and trampled on!—

When on his knees he fell,

Abjuring creeds of Moslem-son,

And traced the Christian-spell,

The Cross, upon his brow now bare!

Gazing still wild above,

Crying—"Behold! my dear ones there!

My Child! mine Angel Love!"

"Father! O Father!" Shrill the cry

Doth rise from that poor child!

That upturned gaze hath met her eye,—

Her father's anguish wild!

And, mad herself, with agony,

She from the Cross would spring,

When lo! a light!—a melody!

As Heaven's harp-strings ring!—

Dazzling her eyes—to stay her there;

When now first meets her sight,

Her Mother pure, an Angel fair,

In Heavenly radiance bright!

Upon that Cross one hand she laid,

The other raised to Heaven:—

"Not vainly hath his soul essayed,—

Thy father! now forgiven!"

One tear of grief, full penitent,
One sigh of anguish given ;
One soul-fraught prayer to Heaven sent,
That earthly sin be shriven,
Will meet a pitying Saviour's eye,
A God of mercy's ear,
Who heedeth, when the erring cry,
And loving, draweth near ! ”

Gently, as soft Eolian note,
Breathes o'er her soul that strain,
As dream-like harmonies that float,
Entrancing sweet the brain !—
One moment short, that mother bright
Absorbs her look above
From hideous scene of strife and fight
In earnest gaze of love ;—
“ Praise God ! ”—she cries,—“ O mother mine !
Leave, leave me not, I pray !
Let but thy sainted presence shine
Upon us through the fray ! ”—
Then, turning to the fight below
Beholds her Father there,
Surrounded by the Moorish foe,
In deadly conflicts share !

What arm, uplifted, flies to save
With valiant Follow'rs near ?
The King ! Pelayo ! ever brave !
Her Liege-love, nobly dear !
Wildly she gazed, with close-clasped hand !
Oh ! madly hot the strife !—
But see ! 'mid sabres' clash, the Band
Have saved that Father's life !
But fierce the chase ! while loudly ring
The atabel, and “ *Alla yell* ”—
While bravely still bears on the King
Up, up the narrow dell !

That Angel Mother—that pure child—
Still from the Cross look down ;
While Zillah cries in terror wild—
“ Great God ! avert Thy frown ! ”
“ *God smileth on thee, daughter mine !* ”
The Angel sweetly spake ;—
“ *His blessings round thy pathway shine !—*
My blessing, daughter, take ! ”—
Laying upon her upraised brow
One white, transparent hand,—
“ *A Mother's blessing on thee now !—*
God will protect thy Band ! ”

Then, as fair morning mists arise
She floateth from the sight,
While Zillah's earnest azure eyes
Pursue through clouds of light,
With outstretched arms and piercing cry,
"O Mother! stay with me!
Sweet Mother! leave me not to die!
Take, take me hence with thee!"

In sooth! she seems too fair to stay!
Too bright to tarry here!
No marvel *should* she float away
From this poor mundane sphere;
Half fainting on the Cross she fell,—
While, borne upon the air,
The sound of gong and Moorish yell,
The battle tale still bear.

"O Heaven! my brain is ringing!
Mine eyes have lost their sight!"—
Then, to the Cross wild clinging,
She veils her orbs of light
With her small palms, so lily-white;—
"Nay, Inez, heed not me;
'Tis but a moment,—of the fight—
How sways it?—dost *thou* see?"

“Nay, Ladye!—I would bear thee hence;”
“Peace, girl!—the King?—the Foe?”—
“The King now stands on the defence!—
As locusts swarm the Foe!
The Crescent-banner floateth high
Above the swarthy horde,—
Low in the dust, grant soon it lie!—
Raise, raise our Cross! O Lord!

“O Ladye! what a goodly sight!
Would Heaven I were a man—
A Warrior brave—I’d surely fight,
And foremost in the van!”—
List! to the sabres’ clash!
Hark! to the cymbal!
Lo! how the bright blades flash!
Ringeth the timbrel!
Hear! oh! hear the madd’ning shout!
Rageth dire the battle!
Grant we be not put to rout,—
Slaughtered as dumb cattle!
Rush the Lancers now along
Over dead there lying,
Riseth wild, “*Wul wullah*” * song
O’er the fallen,—dying!—

* Death song of the Moors.

Hither, thither, madly sway
Woful death and sorrow!—
Fearful from such carnage day
Will rise the coming morrow!—
Now, ah! now retreat our men!
Up, up the steep defile!—
Little doth the Moslem ken
Of our deep-laid wile!
Frenzied, furious press they on!
With shrill zel and tymbalon,
Sounding their own clanging dirge
Ere they sink beneath the surge!”

Now jutting crags and groves of yew,
Obstruct fair Inez’ further view;
And thus the tale *we* still relate
Of that fierce fray and Moslem fate.—
Upriseth shrill “*Wul wullah*” cry,
Where low one dark Division’s head,
Alexman, slain, doth bleeding lie
Amid the dying and the dead!
And “*Alla Allah!*” yet again,
As falls his colleague, Suleymen!
Till Covadonga’s vale doth flow,
With blood of *leading* Chieftain-foe!

Manuza's spirit, too, hath fled !
Dark Leaders, three, lie with the dead !—
Still, Ishmael's blood doth boldly flow
Through Arab veins, despite their woe !—
Follow still that desp'rate Foe,
Now madly on, I wis,
Heedless of the Gulf below !—
The seething, wild Abyss !
Rushing, pressing toward the Bridge,—
God now save each soul !
Dashing fiercely o'er the ridge
Madly to their goal !

Fierce the whistling arrows fly
From pursuing Arabs nigh ;
Fierce *return*, full deep to rest
In their wielder's impious breast !
For, it is said, that " When the bow,
Wielded by Arab-hand,
Was bent to smite the Spanish foe,
A bright Celestial band
Hurled e'en about the poisoned dart,
That Christian breast would pierce,
Back, swift again, to Arab heart,
With deathful venom fierce !"—

On, and still onward yet they rush,
O'er rocky crag and mountain brush ;
Up, up that steep and wild ravine,
The Draw-Bridge reached!—brief time, I
ween!—

Her quiv'ring beams quick open flung,
Her oaken sinews trembling rung!—
Firm all, till Christian-men have passed,
Ere yet the chain asunder cast,
And safe the Band!—A moment more,
'Tis covered by that dark mass o'er!—
A swaying of those pond'rous beams,—
A sev'ring of the sinewy seams,—
A shiv'ring, wrenching, ringing crash,—
And downward, downward, headlong dash
Deep in the seething gulf below,
With shrieks and oaths—the impious Foe!—
And at the instant, down were poured
Huge, loosened rocks, that thund'ring roared
Through the ravine, as, with sharp crash,
Down the defile they ringing dash,—
High from the beetling bowlders wild,
Hurled frightful rocks, there tott'ling piled,—
An avalanche of missiles dread
With vengeful force, destruction sped!—

And of the rear that 'scaped the bridge,
No Moor, but fell beneath the ridge,—
Crushed by the soil they strove to gain!—
Thus hurled defiance,—injured Spain!

With that portcullis' crashing sound,
Throughout the chasm up resound
Wild shrieks of terror and despair,
From 'parting souls, that rend the air!—
From that vast horde, o'erwhelmed, submerged!
'Bove foaming waters roaring heard,
Were fearful oaths, and Prophet call,
Till fainter, feebler, voices fall,—
And echo but prolongs the sound,
Till Nature's silence reigns around!—
Those waters wild are rushing on!
That Host!—the Foe!—are silent!—gone!—
The Moorish banner, tattered,—torn,
Upon the angry surges borne,
As battered sail, rude tempest-tossed,
Life's vessel wrecked! the crew—all lost!—
Oh! short the journey, wildly fleet,
That swarthy mass hath ta'en, to meet
Departed souls in Hades' shade,—
The "*Prophet Great*" and "*Houri-maid!*"

And few among that host of sin,
May pass the "Pearly Gate" within!—
Now God have mercy on each soul,
Rushing unto "Gehenna's" goal!

Of that dark horde doth *none* remain
To chant the mournful requiem strain
O'er parted souls, by Azreal called,
Unwarned, unshriven, and un-palled?—
Ay! *One* of all that turban'd mass,
That wily stole within the Pass,
The renegade, repentant man
Alone is left of all the van!
The *Father*!—struck with dire remorse,
His soul's-eyes opened to the course
So vile, so fraught with shameful woe
That leagued him with the Moslem foe!
Who, when that Angel-Spirit mild,
Beside the Cross, with their pure child,
Gazed sadly on his turbaned brow,
Dismayed beheld his Moslem Vow!
When, calling on his God above,
He traced the Holy Cross of love,
Hurling, defiant of all wrath,
The Crescent in the Moorish path!—

And victim sure had fallen he,
Chanced not the King that act to see,
To recognize, with quick glance, keen,
The Father of his Love and Queen !
Swift to the rescue dashing then,
In fiercest conflict—with his men
To strike—to seize,—and bearing, save
That Sire from Moor,—from torrent grave !—
And thus, unto the farther shore
Of that dark “ Styx ” there passed but one,
Who e’er the impious symbol bore
Of Christ-defying, Moslem-son !

CANTO VIII.

BUT turn we to the brighter side,
Asturians, Christians, where are they ?
Brave hearts ! that now on glory's tide
Behold their Country's breaking day !—
With Victors' bearing, Pæan strain,
Onward they lead their winding way
Through dell, o'er bowlder, rock, and plain,
Along fair Deva's trilling play ;
While on the nearest cliff above,
Assembled, wait the good and fair,
Child, wife, and mother, maiden-love,
With joyous hearts and thankful prayer.
Closer and closer draw they near,
More brightly flashes armor's ray,
Clearer arise loved voices dear,
Victorious up their Mountain-way !
Wild tumult now pervades the camp,
As shouts of joy and hurried tramp,

And neighing steed, up winding path
Bear conquerors from the battle's wrath !

As warriors true, from earthly strife,
Rise they to Eden-bowers of life,
Toward purer hearts, " Houris " more bright
Than e'er may greet the Moslem sight !
And theirs, the recompense all fair
That falleth to the Christian share,
Who, batt'ling evil, conquering sin,
Doth nobly, rarest blessings win ;—
For there upon the mountain height,
Await them, beauteous forms of light,
With loving gaze, from starry eyes,
Bright as the orbs of Paradise !
And hearts, o'er-filled with holy love,
Exceeded scarce by those above !
Who, with them, held angelic view
To guard and bless the Brave and true !
Scarce bide they now the quick advance,
Of glitt'ring armor, blade, and lance ;
But, wild with joy's tumultuous glow,
Well nigh would leap to arms below !—
No time for courtly rule to-day !—
The soul alone, may now bear sway ;

And with heart-bounding happiness
The loved are clasped in wild caress !

But who may now e'en half express
The wild'ring, gushing joy's excess,
That welled the heart of Zillah dear,
As Husband, Father, safe appear !—
While toward the cliff approach they near,
Trembles her frame, as e'en through fear !
And fainter still the quiv'ring throb
Of each sweet pulse, as joy doth rob
Her heart of its full life-blood beat,
Thus Lover, Father, safe to meet !—
Till drooping to the Cross she clings,
As loud the shout of victory rings !
Conscious, the while, that loved ones dear,
Are swiftly, closer, drawing near,—
Nor yet the power to greeting rise,
Scarce raise fair lids from azure eyes !

They come !—when, as with life's last power,
Struggles our fainting lily-flower,
And springing toward that noble breast,—
In wild embrace is swooning pressed !
Close clasped, within those arms to rest,
As weary bird, in sheltered nest

Of loving mate, returned to cheer,—
With fond, repentant Father dear.
Encircled in that fond embrace,
Her own, her only resting place ;
His lips upon those lids, each tress
Oft presses he in joy's excess,—
“ Look up, my life ! oh ! look and see
Thy Lover safe ! safe here with thee !
Raise, raise those lids to me, and know
The victory ours ! Conquered the foe !
Oh ! when my light doth brilliant burn,
Let it not all to darkness turn !
As true it must if thy dear lid
May ope not to thy lover's bid.
Nor let me call thee thus in vain !
Zillah ! mine own ! mine own again !
I clasp thee now upon this breast,—
Oh ! let thine eyes upon me rest ! ”

Gently unclosed the fringèd lid,
Beneath his kiss,—to loving bid ;
As rises mist 'neath sunbeams' power,
From sweetly dew-gemm'd azure flower.
And as fair leaves from budlets break,
The blossoms of her soul awake,

To beam upon the loved one true
Thro' joy-tears bright, of love's sweet dew !
To gaze on him with gentle beam,
All dream-like, in her joy's extreme ;
Scarce realizing full that she,
Thus, now, within his arms may be,
Whom late she saw, 'mid perils rife,
In fiercest combat's deadly strife,
Pursued by fiends of swarthy hue,
Till lost to her sad, straining view !

“ Pelayo ! loved one ! husband dear !
Safe ! safe !—I on thy bosom here !—
O God ! how now Thy name I bless
For this o'er-powering happiness !—
Oh ! welcome, Father ! ” murmured mild
The waking, happy wife and child !
“ Forgive that from thee I did stray,
For it hath drawn to Heavenly way
That leadeth to my Mother bright,
Who watched thee from that Cross's sight,
And breathed so sweetly there to me,
That ‘ God, with her, would smile on thee ! ’ ”

“ No pardon thou, my child, should ask,
Mine, mine the need, and mine the task

To plead to Heaven, and wife, and thee,
For love, forgiveness great to me.
Humbled my soul, all crushed my heart,
That I, by weakness, snares, and art,
In one fell moment, base was driven
To risk my all of love and Heaven !
Oh ! how for mercy hope may I
When 'neath the pure, Celestial sky,
I stand, a shamèd thing of night,
Fashioned in God's own image bright !”

“ In thine own words, my father dear,
Thou speakest that thy soul should cheer ;
For, as His image, thou dost bear,
So, of His light thou holdest share.—
The ‘ Spark Divine ’ within thee shines,—
Each throb of penitence refines ;
And earnest aspirations given,
Are sparks to light thee unto Heaven,
Kindling, until in radiance bright
They fill the soul with holy light,
The Light Divine within doth rise,
To lead to glorious, Heavenly skies !
For He, our Father, God of Love,
E'er gently guides to realms Above,

The erring soul that prays for light
Unto His Courts of Glory bright !”

An Angel fair, of comfort true,
Raising bright hope-beams to the view
Of her poor father, seemed that child,
As sweetly in his face she smiled !

“ Now, daughter blest ! thy words, as light
Fall on my spirit’s darkened night !
And I will to God’s Altar go,
Confess my crime—and while below
Strive to redeem my hateful sin,
And, by good acts and pureness, win
Forgiveness from our Lord Above,
Whom, my soul feels, doth rule in Love.”
His lips he pressed upon her brow,—
“ A father’s blessing on thee now !—
God bless ye both !—I will away,
My sins to shrive,—my Beads to say.”

“ Mine own !—mine husband ! ” soft she sighed,
“ And thou hadst fallen,—I, too, had died !—
Beside that Cross !—with thine, my soul
Had borne its flight to Heavenly goal !—
For ah ! thou couldst not dream, or know
Mine agony ! my deadly woe,

When parted from my aching sight,
I saw thee next in direful fight !
Through flashing sabres, lances' sway,
Dashing thy fearless, frightful way !—
'Mid shoals of tossing turbans white,
As sea-birds on dark waves of night !
'Mid shrieking zel and '*Techir*' strain,
Till sickened, wild, my wretched brain
Could bear no more the horrid sight !
And faded from mine eyes the light !
When, lone, thy poor bird drooped her down,
Hope's pinions crushed, beneath the frown
Of raging battle's dark'ning wrath,
Sweeping across our mountain-path !
And ne'er my soul had wakened more,
So desolate on earthly shore !
But that the shout of Victory's cry
Wrested my soul's departure nigh !
And thy loved voice on homeward way,
My parting spirit's flight did stay !
Called back the life-blood's gushing start,
To this poor, fainting, o'er-taxed heart,—
To sink again with joy extreme,
'Neath ecstasy's o'er-powerful beam !
And waken thus upon thy breast,
Mine only home ! mine only rest ! ”

Deep, deep the love that radiant shone
From his dark eyes within her own
Sweet orbs of heaven-hued lustre bright,
Beaming on him with angel light !
“ Thy home, thy rest, sweet one ! fore’er,—
My love, my heart, my throne to share !
No parting more, no sad adieu,
To bear me from thy loving view !—
Oh ! thou *hast* suffered, precious life !
How suffered ! through that direful strife !
But, parted we, love, not in vain,
For now I clasp thee, mine again !
Mine own ! all mine ! in this bright hour
When victory ours ! and thou, my flower !
Full soon, as Queen with me to reign
O’er loving hearts—and happy Spain !
But throne, and life, would I resign
Now thus again to call thee mine !
For Crown and all of Life to me,
Were nothing worth, save shared with thee.

“ Oh ! when I saw this lovely form,
Afar, from out the battle-storm,
As Angel bright amid the cloud,
My soul was dark with anguish bowed !

Alone, upon that Cross so clinging,—
While loud, wild shouts of strife were ringing!
So frail, so anguished, helpless, pure!
Scarce could the sight mine eyes endure!—
But all is over,—joy-notes ring,
And light with love our souls shall sing
A gushing Anthem, soon to raise
With our brave band in sacred praise.
For list! how rises on the air
The vesper-call for thankful prayer!
For ‘*Te Deum*’ all souls to sing
In joyous, grateful offering!”

Now wend they thro’ fair grove and bower
So sadly passed at dawning hour!—
How changed each aspect since the morn,
When all frowned dark to hearts forlorn!—
Sweet fragrance from the orange trees
As incense rises on the breeze,
From bud and flower ’mid shining green,
As happy passed the fair Bride-Queen;
And blossoms fall on her pure brow,
As gently sways each drooping bough,
While violets bending ’neath her feet,
Send up their perfumes freshly sweet;

And gay the tiny feathered choir,
Ring out in Nature's full-toned lyre
Victorious strains of minstrelsy,
In merry flight, from tree to tree ;—
And bounding steps spring blithe along,
With eyes of light and souls of song,
Their rapturous praise to offer here,
For loved ones saved !—for Victory dear !
And maidens, wreathed with lilies white
All glist'ning fair with dew-drops bright,
Around brave lovers' brow, now wind
Chaplets of Laurel, Bay entwined.

But as they reach the Altar-rock,
Behold the happy mountain-flock
Count Eudon, prostrate, penitent
Before the Cross, in sackcloth bent !
Before the Saviour's image there,
His burden full, of grief, laid bare,—
Repentant of each fault and sin,
Forgiveness, praying, now to win !
Who, in his anguish, deep, sincere,
Remorseful in the Padre's ear
Had poured the tale of grievous woe,
That leagued him with his country's foe !—

And thus before all eyes, would he,
The People should his sorrow see,
For perjured faith and honor's loss,
Him suppliant 'neath the Saviour's Cross.

Slowly he turned, and raised his face,
Down which the scalding tear-drops chase ;—
“Thou seest a sadly erring one,
Repentant for all evil done ;
Who, none but God in Heaven doth own,
Bending to Him and Christ alone,
Praying, most humbly here and free,
That he forgiven full may be !”

Now raised the Priest the Penitent,
And o'er him praying, humbly bent,
Signing the Cross, on ashened head,
With Holy water, freely shed,—
While words of comfort chanted he,
Of God's great mercy, full and free !
How, sinners vile, repentant, may
Beam white as snow in God's pure ray !
Then, from his shoulders casts aside
The ashen vesture, that doth hide
The robe of white, all purely fair,
Symbol of that his soul should wear.

Raising his eyes toward Heaven, he said,—
“Great God! Thy gracious hand hath led
Unto the Cross, this erring son,
Who turneth from his evil done;
From Thy fair path late gone astray,
Doth now for pardon, anguished pray!
Hear him, O Father! save and bless
Thy suppliant in the wilderness
Of sin, as earth,—for sworn hast Thou,
‘The soul that unto Me doth bow,
The contrite sinner, will I shrive,
And save his guilty soul alive!’
Therefore, shall I not plead in vain,—
Receive I in Thy Fold again
The one lost Lamb,—the Penitent!
And thus, through me, Thy servant sent,
Thy Blessing on his head I lay,
Absolving him from error’s way;
And offer ‘Holy Sacrament’
Unto Thy child, now penitent;—
The blessed Eucharist receive,
In name of all thou dost believe;
The ‘undivided Trinity,’
Bless thee through all Eternity.”

Then, from the Altar lifting up,
The Blessed Bread, and Sacred Cup,—
Unto him kneeling, solemn said,—
“Receive from me the Holy Bread,—
‘The Bread of Life,’ in faith partake,
And Covenant with Heaven make.
By faith, Christ’s blood shall ransom thee,—
His, who once died on Calvary,
Who said,—‘In memory of me
Do this ;’—thus, henceforth, pardoned be—
Therefore, through Christ, absolved thou art,—
God’s blessing thine,—in peace depart.”

Quick now advance the Royal Pair ;—
’Mid tears of joy the daughter fair
Enfolds with filial tenderness
Her sire, in loving, fond caress ;—
From King and nobles there around,
Congratulations warm resound,
And, as in Heaven, on earth there beamed
Joy through each soul, for one redeemed.

Now, seated on the rural throne,
The King, with his loved bride,
Blooming as mountain-rose fresh blown,—
The Father by her side ;

And Alphonse, tiny Eros-boy,
E'er near his Psyche-Queen,
In smiling, radiant, youthful joy
Of petted child, is seen
With silken locks oft sly to play
Of waving, golden sheen
That on fair shoulders sunny lay,
As halo's rays, I ween !—
And every heart beats joyously,
Each soul with hope is light,
Here in the merry mountain free,
For glorious victory bright !
And, by his Royal master near,
Standeth in noble pride,
Gomez, who through all paths of fear,
Still by his King doth bide ;
Gomez, who well hath played good-sword
In yonder dark ravine
'Gainst the departed Moslem horde,
With Braves round King and Queen.

Now grave about the Altar stand
The Fathers of the flock,
Loved shepherds of the wandering band
Beside the flower-decked rock ;—

While pæans' gay, triumphant note
Far on the breeze doth float,
Till full "*Laudamus*" clear resounds
Throughout Auseva's bounds,
An offering, in melody
For great and glorious victory !

TE DEUM LAUDAMUS.

God hath heard His children cry,
God, in mercy, hath drawn nigh,
God, our Father, blessed be,
God ! and Holy Trinity !

"*Maria Madre*" on us smiled ;—
From the Cross that bore her child,—
With a Sainted Angel bright,
Blest us, through the Moslem fight !

We were weak, but on our side
Did the Blessed Lord abide ;
Else, when foes upon us rushed,
Death these voices would have hushed.

Praise the Lord ! Who, through the fray,
Gave us not as Moslem prey !—

Our salvation wrought hath He,
Glory ! Praise to Him e'er be !

Not by our own sword, or arm,—
“ His Right Arm,”—saved us from harm ;
O'er us still, in loved defence,
Shines His loving countenance.

The Lord appears for us and ours,
Our stay and shield thro' battle-hours ;
The Lord our enemies o'er-throws,—
Dashes in pieces all our foes !

Then not to us, O Lord ! but Thee,
Alone the power and honor be ;
For Thou, the Lord, great things hast done,
Rejoice ! the victory God hath won !

Oh ! bless the Lord, Who victory bore,
From this time forth, for evermore ;
Bless Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—
Forevermore, Auseva's host !

The waters dark our foes have crowned,
O'er wicked souls, loud they resound ;
The waters deep flow o'er the proud,—
O'er their vile souls in fury loud !

Glory to God ! Who victory won—
Glory to Jesus Christ His Son !
Glory to the Holy Ghost,
Ever sing our Christian Host.

As we erst to Thee did bow,—
As we offer praises now,—
In homage evermore we bend,
Glory to God ! World without end !

As dying now, the notes of song
Are echoed o'er the hills along,
While bright the sky, all crimson drest,
Reflects rich hues from out the west,
Rose-colored, o'er the gathered there,
As some rare picture glowing fair ;—
Throne, Altar, groupings, beauteous shown,
To perfect full the tableau's tone ;
While maidens bright, with upraised hands,
As Floral Nymphs, or Sylphide bands,
Spring dancing forth from myrtle bowers,
Bearing wreathed coronals of flowers
With swaying arms, and glancing feet,
That to their silv'ry song time beat,—
Waving in palms of lily white,
Fair coronets of blossoms bright,

Shedding their perfume rich, o'er all,
In waving, graceful, rise and fall,—
And thus those Oreads fondly bear
Their off'ring toward the Royal Pair.

A tableau still before the throne !—
While two, who there most beauteous shone
On poisèd feet, with bending sway,
In liquid notes chant forth their lay,—
While yet another to the sight
The scene presents, in shade and light ;
For Maidens, Priests, and Warriors there,
Combine to form a whole most rare.

SONG OF THE MAIDENS.

All hail to the Fair and the Brave !
Hail ! hail to the Queen of our Love !
Hail Pelayo ! his land who doth save,
Bringing Peace to our Ark with his Dove.

We have come from the bright orange grove,
Where creepeth the green myrtle-vine,
'Mid her buds and her blossoms to rove,—
A Wreath for our Queen-Bride to twine.

And we've pilfered the Violet fair,
From her moss-grown and shady retreat,
Its richness of perfume to bear,
With the Jasmine, in soul-breathing sweet.

And down in the valley afar,
Where the streamlets are ever at play,
We have wandered, where sunbeam, or star,
Scarce may peep but with glimmering ray,

Where, at midnight, the Fairies, all sprightly,
Oft gather in mystical ring,
To dance on the mossy banks lightly,
As blossoms they sportively fling,

While Elfin in green leaves are floating
O'er rippling and bright silv'ry spray ;—
In their tiny and gay mimic boating
To frolic, in wild, merry play.

And we've gathered the Blossoms there lying,
The Flow'rets the Fairies threw by,
With the Drops from the Elfin-spray flying—
Dew-gems, in their leaf-boats, that lie,

As a Charm for the Fair and the Brave,—
An Amulet, precious with light,

To guard and to bless and to save,
From darkness, and sorrow, and blight !

And we've gathered the Lilies there pure,
Enfolded in love-leaves of green,
All nestling, so fondly secure,
For the brow of our Lily-souled Queen.

And still farther down by the river,
Where taller their sisters are grown,—
Adown where the light aspens quiver,
Court Lilies, have culled, freshly blown.

The Asphodel fair in her pride,
The Lily of sun-light and power,
For the Wreath of our Palace-born bride,
With the modest Forget-me-not flower.

And sweet Water-Lilies of white,
Their beauties that lave in the stream,
Raising forth their pure heads to the light
From the waters that sparklingly gleam

With joy, that within their fond breast
The dear-ones so calmly repose,
In the bosom so trustingly rest,
Whose love-tide unceasingly flows,

As hearts, fond, of Spain's Christian land,
Now enfold Royal Lilies of light
In the bosom of Auseva's band
Whose souls well with love ever bright.

And bright in her silvery sheen
The Tuberose we fondly enwound,
For it breathes of the mind of our Queen,
Imparting sweet richness around.

And the Rose, pure and white, still we place,—
The queen of the flow'rets most fair,
For our Queen, who o'er all beareth grace,
In the Wreath we now lovingly bear.

We have come from the grove and the fountain,
Have roamed o'er the heath, wild and free,
O'er the green, sunny side of the mountain,
To gather our Love-gifts for thee ;

We have come from the blossoming bowers,
Where the buds and the flow'rets grow fair,
Where the Cistus its perfumed leaves showers,
Silver sheen o'er the moss-carpet there,

Breathing out all the night its sweet breath,
As the Bride on her fond lover's breast,

The Hero, who saveth from Death
His people, and bringeth them rest.

And we bear their bright buds in the hand,
And their fragrance we bear on our feet ;
A grateful and happy Queen-band,
With off'rings of love now to greet.

And a Chaplet, still worthy have we
For the King of all hearts—for the Brave,—
Glowing leaves from the shining Bay-tree,
And branches the Laurel doth wave,

With Oak, and blest Amaranth twined,
Bright “ Immortelle ” fair ever to be,
We fondly, our Liege, have enshrined
In a Coronal off’ring to thee.

And blossoms we’d evermore spread
In the path of our Monarch and Queen,—
Fair buds, their sweet fragrance to shed,
Rose and Laurel, with fresh Myrtle green.

From us, at thy feet, then receive
The Theme that we florally weave,
Symbolic of virtues most rare,
Breathing type of the Brave and the Fair.

“Nay, nay, fair maidens!” cried the King,
“Not at our feet such off’ring fling!
From hands so fair, the gift, I trow,
Should only rest upon our brow.”
And kindly bending, King and Queen
Are fondly crowned in floral sheen;
While Royal thanks and Queen’s caress,
Perfect the maidens’ happiness.

And now the day is bravely done,
All brightly sinks the setting sun;
While happy hearts in joy repair,
Evening repast and rest to share,
Each to his mountain-bower of light,
In joyous dreams to pass the night,—
Dreams, not with dawn to fade away,
But shine more truthful with the day,—
To prove, no myth or idle tale
Their victory in Deva’s vale!—
That soon, Spain’s gates shall open wide,
By easy battle’s conquering tide.

CANTO IX.

How changed all hearts since that sad morn

When Zillah left her bridal bower,

In fearful wretchedness forlorn!—

Now, blooming as the mountain flower!

Joyous they wend their happy way

Through flow'ry paths where brooklets play,—

Fair Zillah, at this sunset hour,

With Husband, Father, to their Bower!

Eager to show her sire how fair

Her forest-home with beauties rare;—

O'erjoyed, that father now should rest

Within her own wild mountain-nest.

Pensive the father, as he cast

His thoughts o'er present and the past,—

On his poor, suff'ring, gentle child,

Thus fleeing to the mountain-wild

To suffer hardships new and strange,—
As rustic maiden, here to range!
And gazing sadly,—on her brow
Fond kisses prest, exclaiming—“Thou!
O thou! so nursed in palaces, my child!
To dwell within this mountain wild!
O brave young heart! ’tis those like thee
Are worthy of Spain’s soil to be!—
And base my soul with infamy,
To turn one moment e’en from thee,
My Country, when the frail and pure,
For thee so nobly could endure!”

“Nay, father dear!” she fondly cried,
“The past is o’er,—all cast aside,
Save but as lessons in our sight,
To profit in the future bright.”

How gazed the King with loving pride
Upon his joyous forest-bride!
So happy here her sire to greet
With welcome fond to their retreat!

“See, father, see! our mossy lawn!
Our fountain bright!—my gentle fawn!—

How fond with pleasure beams his eye
To view the loved ones drawing nigh.
Estrella mia! pleased art thou
To see thy mistress smiling now?
Ay! well thou know'st this sad, sad dawn,
No word had she for thee, my fawn.

“And list my cushat-doves so sweet,
Cooing, in welcome now to greet
Us home again to fairy bowers
Where love fills up their life, as ours.—
Now, father, see my hiding place,
That eglantine and wild-rose lace
With clinging tendrils freshly fair
That bud and blossom ever bear!
Had ever birdling fairer nest?—
By loving mate more fond carest?
And oh! how happy now, to see
My father dear thus safe with me!

“Search for the entrance! Father, look!
Was ever so secure a nook?”
Parting the branches, bright she smiled,—
“Behold! the nest of thy dear child!
What say you now?” as enter they
Where clear stalactites sparkling play

Around the hall of marble white,
Reflecting many a mirrored light,
Fresh decked with flowers by maiden hand,
Tender and loving of their band;
And cushions, carpet richly green
Of freshest moss, are beauteous seen.
“Nay, rest not here!” and, as a bird,
Her joyous tones are ever heard,
As gliding, flitting through each nook,
And hall, and chamber, crying,—“Look!”
Till now, quite near her own boudoir,
A spacious chamber, covered o’er
With fresh-culled flowers of every hue,
Bespangled with the evening dew,
And pillowed couch of fragrant heath
Of purple, and elastic wreath,
Made soft with downy-covering, spread,
From brightest breast of songster shed:—
And Bead and Crucifix are there,
For Orison and Matin share,
While fragrant torch-light’s gentle gleam,
Fall on the senses as a dream.

“See, father dear! here shalt thou rest
In this our Paradise so blest,—

This, thine own Sanctum calm to be,
When thou to solitude would'st flee.
Oh! am I not joyous and blest to see,
Thus Liege-love, and Father, both safe with me!
And I never would fly from my loved Eden-bower,
For the richest of courts or the highest of power!"

Radiant in her bright womanhood,
She beamed, as all of fair and good,
With sparkling eyes and soul of light,
O'er-flowing with love's ardor bright.

"It is, in truth, fair child," said he,
"A bower o'er blithe and kind for me;
And God, who guards the sparrow's rest,
Hath fondly my sweet birdling blest.—
God ever bless thee more, my child,
Henceforth, as through the mountain-wild!"—
'Mid tears, he pressed her pure young brow,—
"Receive thy father's blessing now."

Followed the King the happy pair,
Gazing upon his magnet fair,—
But at her filial tenderness,
Half sprang to clasp such loveliness!

The beauteous being good as bright,—
Exclaiming,—“ Angel thou of light!
My Star! my blessing e’er to be,—
Without thee, what were life to me!”

But now the evening feast is spread,
And to the Hall the Sire is led,
Upon the King’s right hand is placed,
While Zillah fair, his heart-side graced;—
And that gay banquet freely crowned
With every good the Mountain found,
Of viand, draught, or fresh fruits rare,
That richest grove or vine may bear;—
While Nobles high, and Warriors bold,
Bishops and Friars, Padres old,
And Maidens fair, are seated round,
In honor of the Father found.—
Above, around, droop garlands sweet,
Blossoms of brightness, close to meet
The eye and cheek and breathing sense,
With fragrance, as of rare incense.

Marvels the Sire that Wild so lone
Should all of banquet’s share thus own,
Sweeter and richer far than e’er
His patios, parks, or vineyards bear!

And gay the merry cup goes round,
That freshly innocent is found ;
And bright the glance from loving eyes,
'Mid badinage and keen replies ;
While speak the grave of all the past,
And of that effort, now the last,
When, with well-planned and boldest stroke,
Brave Spanish sons shall rend their yoke,—
The last frail link that bindeth down,
And King and Queen all happy crown
With loud acclaim, free banners float,
God's Cross upraised, and Victor-note !

Fain would they from Count Eudon hear
Of much that hath not reached their ear ;
Afar thus in the mountain-wood,
Of all unknown, of ill or good.—
Briefly he spake of erring ones,
The Renegade, Apostate sons ;
The fall'n from Faith—through craven fear,
Renouncing all of Truth most dear ;
Some, through the sordid hope of gain,—
Some for their towers and lands of Spain ;
Others, by wicked led astray,
All wretched on their trait'rous way ;—

Needing compassion greatly now,—
For perjured faith and broken vow
Have eaten, vulture-like, within,—
Penance enough for every sin!

Of Julian, still they'd further know:—

“How fares he with the Moslem foe
Far in the East?—’tis well this day
He came not near our lances’ play!”

“Forbear your ire, for great his woe,
Since leagued Count Julian with the foe!

The tree that seemeth freshly fair,
May canker at the root still bear.—

Hatred, he reads in every eye,—
The Christians curse him, passing by!

Men whisper, as he wends forlorn,
And turn away in bitter scorn!

And mothers, should he chance pass by,

Snatch close their infants to the breast,
Lest on them glance his traitor eye,

‘*The evil eye,*’ upon them rest!

Till, his at length that bitter ban,—

The loathing of his fellow-man;

While now, the direct curse of all,

To loathe himself, doth justly fall!

Sulieinan, too, suspicious still
That yet the count may work him ill,
Saying,—‘He who betrays his land,
May traitor prove yet to *our* band ;’
Orders for his arrest soon sped,—
But ere received, the count had fled
To mountains of the Arragon,—
A wandering, homeless, wretched one !

“The Emir, fierce to lose his prey,
Quick crossed the straits where Ceuta lay,
The Countess Julian and her son,
To capture ere the day begun.—
And now, as it was given me,
A tale of fear I’ll tell to thee,
Whose horrors, chanced the very night
The Bishop Orpas’ soul took flight ;
His traitor-body, bound in chain,
Could not the summoned soul restrain,—
That left its gloomy prison gate,
For who may say what realm or fate ? ”

TALE OF THE COUNTESS JULIAN.

At midnight hour,
Within her Tower,
The Countess grieved,
All hope bereaved,

O'er pleasures past,
And joys, the last!—
When, sound of fear!
She low doth hear

The solemn swell
Of tolling bell,—
As moaning breeze
Through cypress trees!

When, sight of fear!
There doth appear
Orpas! her brother,
Standing near!

His *wraith*! full true,
To mortal view!
All ghastly white,
With eyes of light,

That lambent beam
With flashing gleam!—
With grave voice low,
And sad with woe,

He mournful said,
“Lo! from the *dead*,
My sister, see!
I come to thee!

Avert thy fate
Now, ere too late!—
Guard well thy son!
For bloodhounds run

Upon his track,
For death or rack!—
Guard then thy son
Ere evil done!

His purity
Might safety be,
But, *for our sins*
He, vengeance wins!

Then, ceased his word ;—
No sound was heard,—
Nor form was seen
Where he had been !

“ Roused from her stupor,—quick the ‘ Call ’
Frandina,* for the gath’ring gave
Of soldiers, warriors, chieftains all,
Their infant master now to save.—
Full true the spirit spake her then !
For lo ! adown the rocky glen
Were seen the Emir and his host—
Th’ Armada, swarming black their coast !—
By storm, at length, the Citadel
Was taken, and the Fortress fell !
When, with an anxious, fearful heart,
The countess sought her to depart.

“ ‘ Surely,’ she said, ‘ *within the grave,*
My child, I still may hope to save !’
And thus, among the *vaulted Dead,*
Her Innocent, she trembling led,—
‘ In darkness, and alone to be,
Thou’rt not afraid, my child,’ said she.—

* The Countess Julian.

‘No, mother, they can do no harm,’
Replied the boy, in accents calm,—
‘And why should I my sister fear,
Who loved me e’er, so fondly dear?’
The Sepulchre, she opening said,—
‘Listen, my son, amid the Dead,
With thy dear sister wait me here,—
And silence keep;—for much I fear,
Fierce, cruel men now seek to slay,
Or bear thee hence from me away!
And as thy life thou holdest dear,
In silence now await me here.’

“Then, up the Citadel, in haste
Her trembling steps she quick retraced,—
Soon to the Emir prisoner brought,
Who for the *child* now eager sought.
‘*Where hid’st thy child? full quickly state,
Or sad, my dame, thy luckless fate!
Torture shall wring the truth from thee,
Unless thou now divulge it free!*’

“With haughty bearing stood she there,—
A queen, in stately grandeur rare!
‘*Emir, the truth is to me wed,—
My darling child lies with the dead!*’

Then cried Alahor,—‘Soon we’ll see!
Countess, thou comest hence with me
To search a jewel we must find;—
And sooth, methinks, if I’m not blind,
Thy child’s concealment thou wilt speak,
If not by words, in blanching cheek;
And thus, Condesa, show full well
That which thy lips deign not to tell!’

“Now search they every nook around,
Above, below, and under ground;
While blanches pale her cheek with fear
As now the sepulchres they near!
But as they turn to pass them by,
A light of joy gleams in her eye;
Which, seeing, Yuza quick doth say,—
‘*We’re leaving now our gentle prey!*’

“‘*Enter the sepulchres!*’ he cried,
‘*I faith, the Countess hath not lied!*’
Then, as the tombs they searching ope,
A strange, fair sight upon them broke!—
Within Florinda’s* resting place,
One dimpled arm thrown o’er his face,

* Daughter of Count Julian.

That cherub-child in Heavenly sleep
Lay now, as Angel pure, to keep
Watch o'er his sister's ashes dear,
While fiends were searching for him near!
Where, through long, weary hours, had he
Lain in his infant purity!

“A brawny arm of soldier dread,
Raised that sweet blossom from the Dead;
As Azreal's night-wings, bear away
Fair buds, from darksome homes of clay
To hearts that mourn;—but not as he,
The Angel *dark*, to those who see
With *soul-oped eyes, the vista bright*
Through which those buds are borne to Light!

“But, Azreal dark in *deed*, is he,
That to the Emir fierce could flee,
With that poor birdling, struggling there,—
While mother's shrieks pierce shrill the air!

“As bird for stolen young fierce flies,
Pursued, that mother, with wild cries
Of anguish to the Emir's feet!—
God help thee now, that foe to meet!

That cruel and relentless one!—
‘Mercy!’ she cried,—‘My child! my son!
O Emir! to a mother’s prayer
Listen! and God will now and e’er
Shed blessings on thee from Above,
From His pure fount of Heavenly love;
Let but my prayer thy mercy meet,
And I will kiss thy very feet!’

“‘Now bear this frantic woman hence!’

The Emir cried,—‘and guard her well!’
And thus, with cruel violence,
They dragged her to the dungeon-cell!—
No pity to the mother shown!—
No ray of mercy deep within
That heart, hard as the ‘nether stone,’
And dark with all of earthly sin!—
Where rests that spark, O man of night!
Divine, within thy soul’s deep blight,
The *one pure drop* to purify,
And draw thy spirit Heaven nigh?
For e’en the rocky crystal’s breast
Will show, where *dewy drop* doth rest
Within its heart, all stony bound,
When dug from depth of darkest ground!

Turning to Yuza, standing near,
The Emir whispered in his ear ;
When, straight, that son of Ishmael wild
Led out the innocent young child
Forth to a tower, up staircase nigh,
Until they reached its summit high ;
Where on its battlement they stand,
The fair child grasping close his hand.

“ ‘ Cling not to me, my child, so tight,
There is no harm to thee ! ’—
‘ Father, I fear not,—but the height
Is wondrous great to see ! ’
Gazed with delighted eyes the child !
Bright waved his sunny hair
In the fresh breeze, that gently mild
Played o’er his forehead fair ;
And glowed his cheek at sight so grand,
Where foaming billows reach
Afar off toward the sunny land
Of Spain’s bright, glitt’ring beach !
Said Yuza—‘ Know’st thou, child, the shore
Beyond those waters blue ? ’
‘ ’Tis Spain ! the land my parents bore ! ’
Replied the boy, most true.

‘Stretch forth thine hands and bless it then,
My child!’ the swarthy demon said;—
The trusting boy, no harm to ken,
Unclasped his hold,—with upraised head
Stretched forth his tiny hands, to bless
His country, with fond, ardent glow,—
When that foul fiend of wickedness
Hurled, o’er the battlement below,
That pure young form, far, headlong down!—
Where surges dash, ’mid rocks’ dark frown,
And sea-birds screech and waters moan
His requiem,—that child was thrown,
A shapeless mass, all crushed beneath!—
The foaming spray, his Funeral wreath,—
The billows white, his ‘Winding sheet!’—
And thus—*Death culled that Blossom sweet!*

“The morning’s dawn, that mother found
Led from her dungeon,—chained and bound!
Dishevelled hair, and dark eyes wild,
Told well, *she knew all of her child!*
No tear, no prayer, she offers now,—
Content, her head in death to bow!—
For hopes all crushed, and lights all fled,
Since her pure child lay mangled!—dead!

To '*Christian pris'ners!*' now doth call
Alahor loud,—‘Behold ye here
Count Julian's wife! He, on ye all
Brought ruin! wrecked your country dear!’
Then, ordered he, that poor one! lone!—
They, unto death, should each man stone!
But back they shrink with horror all,—
‘Not upon *her*,—from us e’er fall
The punishment *he* well deserves—
For God, who ne’er from justice swerves
Hath said,—‘Ye shall not harm or slay,
Vengeance is mine, I will repay!’—
The Emir vowed that each should die,
Who would not with his will comply;—
And so, the Countess, thus, and then,
Was murdered by her countrymen!

“Too sad a tale, list ye to-night,
When all should breathe alone of bright
And joyous deeds, in cheerful strain,
To banish every thought of pain.”—
“Nay! nay!” they cry, “we needs must hear
Of all the past, or gay, or drear;—
Tell us, we pray thee, one and all,
Wert near Cordòva in her fall?”

“I was,” replied Count Eudon, clear,
“But why *me* ask, *Pelistes* here?”—
“Because, when of this tale we seek,
Pelistes briefly e’er doth speak,
For he hath an o’er-modest heart,—
Ne’er in his own praise bearing part,
And therefore, we but simply learn
The Moor he battled in his turn;
That he hath hither fled, we know,
And how escaped he from the foe;
But of his prowess, valiant, bold,
Have ne’er, as yet, been fully told;
Well know we all, his spirit brave,
That nobly perilled life, to save
His cavaliers,—e’en twice essayed
Through dangers dire to bring them aid,—
And now, escaped his happy turn,
 Brave comrades fallen, captive still,
How sad his heart doth eager burn
 Their chains to burst—his vengeance fill!—
And strong the hope, not distant long,
The hour, when loud our Victory-song,
Upon those captive ears shall fall
In Freedom’s hopeful, cheering call!
To rescue Braves from Moslem foe,
To strike the fierce oppressor low!—

Dark prison gates wide opened be,
And Spain ! loved Spain ! all glorious, free !

“ And now, Count Eudon, ’tis for thee
To sound Pelistes’ bravery,—
Who, modest, humble e’er as brave,
Denies us still the boon we crave.”

But ere the tale may yet be told,
The “Pledge,” from Fair, and Grave, and Bold,
Must freely pass this joyous e’en,
For Bride and Groom—for King and Queen ;—
The toast in honor passed around,—

All, save Count Eudon, seated now,—
“ Full happy here am I to sound
Just tribute,—and for that brave brow,
So bending now in noble shame,
Wreathe truthful laurels,—crown the name
Of brave Pelistes, bright in glory !—
And thus,—I pass me to my story.

STORY OF PELISTES.

“ While Taric swept around our land
His scimitar, destruction bent,
The Greek Magued, with motley band,
To siege Cordòva soon was sent ;

Whose people, all secure, with pride
Beheld, as inundation's tide
Don Rod'rick, with his bands of Spain
Sweeping o'er Guadalquiver's plain !
But, dire dismay ! the ' Fleeing ' bring
Wild tidings of their mighty host !
Gone ! fallen now, El Cid their King !
Routed the army !—Roderick lost !

“ Amid dire consternation great,
Pelistes, haggard, at their gate,
Leading a band of Cavaliers,
Arrived, to lighten somewhat fears ;
For well Cordòva's people knew
Pelistes' spirit, steadfast, brave ;—
Him rallying round with hope anew,
Cried,—‘ Roderick is fallen ! thou wilt save !
No King, no Leader, now have we !—
Thou unto us as Chieftain be !
Defend our city from the foe !
Protect us, in this hour of woe ! ’

“ Crushed by his grief,—ambition free,
Nought but his Country's woes to see !
Pelistes, for her suff'ring sake,
Effort, though desp'rate, still would make ;—

And answering said,—‘ This is the hour

To stand up bravely, one and all !

Our city, guarded well by tower,

And battlement, and strong built wall,

May check the progress of the Moor,—

If ye but promise to endure

Bravely with me, the boon ye ask

I’ll freely grant, and to the task.’

The citizens warm pledges gave

To stand by him until the last,—

With zeal untiring seek to save

Their walls, and towers, till hope were past ;

But, weak in faith, and strong for self,

The wealthy, for their dross and pelf,

Soon as they heard the Moslem tread,

With gathered treasures, basely fled !

E’en too the monks, church, convent sacked,

And, with their riches quickly packed,

For mountains, or Toledo, all—

City and Altars left to fall !

“ Pelistes, though deserted now

By craven ones, all frightened thence,

Determined, yielding ne’er to bow

While he might strike for their defence.

With Cavaliers, a scanty band,
And Fugitives, in numbers small,
Firmly resolved to bravely stand,—
The city save—or nobly fall !

“ Advanced that motley army then—
Apostate Christians, Moslem men—
By Renegado Greek Magued,
And shameless traitor Julian led !—
While still afar from city wall,
In luckless chance, it did befall
That, wand’ring Guadalquiver’s side,
Their scouts a Spanish shepherd spied,—
From Cordova, the trembling hind,
Whom, basely craven, free they find
The city’s secrets to relate,—
How guarded wall and tower, to state !

“ ‘ The walls and gates,’ said Maguèd,
‘ Are they all strong and well guarded ? ’
‘ The walls are wondrous strong and high,
And soldiers guard them, ever nigh,—
But, secret spot full well I know,
Where entrance now can make the foe,—
Which easily may soon be found
Just near the bridge,—high from the ground.

Here, I observed the other morn,
That portions of the wall had worn,
And falling, made a sorry breach,
Which, by a fig-tree near, you reach,
And so, with ease, the wall be scaled,
When other efforts shall have failed ;'—
And thus, that traitor, vile as low,
Betrays his city,—guides the foe !

“ Well having marked the villain's tale,
Maged there halted in the vale ;
And renegado Spaniards sent,
As if in flight—for safety bent,
To seek within Cordòva's wall
Refuge and shelter, ere they fall ;
Who, to her gates all treach'rous fly,—
With terror feigned, for entrance cry !
The tale well told—admitted they
Within her walls to wend their way !—
Vile traitors ! stealing in their fold,
As Serpent of fair Eden old !
The kindly hands would rescue bring,
Thus basely treacherous to sting !—
Where will such souls find refuge, pray,
When shineth clear Eternal day,

And spirits dark, erst 'clad in light,'
Stand full revealed, as forms of night ?
No cloak of seeming virtue's fold
Around their spirit-forms enrolled,—
But, black, in bold relief to stand
'Mid sinful souls—a fiendish band !
No more to steal 'mid pure and blest,
Or with the good and bright to rest ;
Afar ! afar from loved-ones fair,
Their home, their presence ne'er to share !
But, with *their like* enforced to dwell
'Mid horrors, mortal may not tell !
Ay ! with their like alone to dwell !
Worse penance than the dungeon-cell !
'Mid fiends that all commandments break,
From widow, orphan,—justice take !
Defrauders, causing suff'ring poor
Mis'ry still greater to endure !
Deceivers, robbers, murd'ers all !
On whom just punishment shall fall ;—
When withered souls, warped, cramped, and
 seared,
 Shall to their level gravitate,
To dwell in darkness justly feared,—
 Their sure, as wretched, direful fate !

Now wait the fiends, the coming foe,—
Their signal dark for treach'rous blow !
Till, on a wild, tempestuous night,
The bridge of Guadalquiver bright
The Moslem neared—in ambush lay,—
While Maguèd steals his wily way
With chosen men, and dark-souled guide
To ford the stream, and by the side
Of tow'ring walls grope silently,
Until they reach the wild ' Fig tree ;'
Where traitors, now within the wall,
Await, to aid at signal call ;—
Their turbans' folds they wind in cord,
And lower to the Moorish horde,
Who scale the wall, the opening reach,
And safely pass within the breach ;
A moment only now to wait,
 When, drawing scimitars, they hie,
Quickly unto the ' river gate,'
 That openeth where the bridge doth lie.

“ The guards, surprised thus from within,
 Were soon o'ercome by Moslem horde,—
The gate thrown open,—with wild din
 The foe, o'er bridge, thro' entrance poured !—

With hasty zeal then sallied out
The band by brave Pelistes led ;
Who, soon all hemmed each side about,
For refuge to a convent fled,
Whose pond'rous doors they quickly close,
As furious rush their fiendish foes—
When, from each tower and battlement,
They frightful missiles hurling sent,—
And, thus assailed, the Moors retire,
Not relishing such weapons' fire ;
Forced from the convent thus away,
They threat'ning cry,—‘ *Bide we our day !*’

“ Pelistes now examines all,
To find full strong each gate and wall ;—
Massive, secured with bolt and bar
The grated doors and windows are ;
A cistern large of water there,
Provisions, of a liberal share,—
And so, proposed to ‘ Make a stand,’
Until relief should be at hand.
Fondly, his brave and earnest word,
The cavaliers, with shouts, all heard ;
Not one, but would in death have lain
There nobly down for Chief and Spain !

“ Three weary, anxious months, the band
Defended bravely well, and sure,
Their sacred walls,—most firm did stand
’Gainst each assault of furious Moor.
The standard of their faith waved high
And constant, on the loftiest tower,
That it might meet some Christian eye,—
And ever through the night’s dark hour
A fire bright blazed, as signal call
Of dire distress, to Spaniards all
Throughout the country wide around,—
That helpful succor might be found.

“ The watchmen from the turret gazed,
Hoping, through each dust-cloud that raised,
They might descry their Chiefs of Spain,—
But ah ! alas ! they looked in vain !
For all that country, now, forlorn,
Abandoned lay !—of life quite shorn,
Save Arab horseman chanced to stray
Along fair Guadalquiver’s way.

“ At length, provisions all were gone !—
And, one by one, they now must slay
Loved chargers, that had borne them on
Oft faithfully, through battle-day.—

And miseries of famine sore,
Unmurmuring, they wasting bore,—
Pelistes meeting with a smile
Of loving courage, e'er meanwhile.
The good knight read their suff'rings well,
Which their wan faces plainly tell,—
For them, more than himself to grieve,—
And hence, resolved forthwith to leave
And effort for deliverance make,
If e'en thro' death, for their loved sake ;
So to the Convent-court he led
The assembled braves, to whom he said :—

“ ‘ Brethren, defending, moons full three,
These sacred towers from impious hand,
Privation, famine, borne have we,—
My nobly brave, and suff'ring band !—
But now, starvation drives me forth !—
My cavaliers, ye know full well
Our cause is desp'rate !—sadly loth
Am I, these grievous words to tell !
And chance but one, I see me now,
All peril fraught, with danger rife !—
But, as your leader, here I vow
To brave it,—e'en at risk of life !

“ ‘ Our countrymen know not our fate :—

The morrow’s dawn I’ll hie me hence,
When first is oped the city gate,
To seek for aid in our defence.

Alone, perchance I safe may pass,
And unsuspected through the mass,
Then, to Toledo speedy fly,
Soon to return with succor nigh.

Now mark ! upon yon mountain high
Should ye five burning lights espy,
Be sure that aid is near at hand,
And, hast’ning, gather all the band
To sally on the city’s heart,
While I attack her outer part,—
Her gates and bulwarks meantime siege,—
Your prayers, kind nobles, for your Liege ! ’

“ And leading to the Chapel, then,

Before the Altar prayed they there,
Pelistes, and his loyal men,

Kneeling before the Virgin fair,—
When, rising, farther thus he spake :—
‘ Now, ere I leave, this promise make,
That, to the last, ye, one and all,
Will bide within the convent wall ;

Defend, as Christian brave men here,
Your Cross and honor, ever dear,—
Never renounce your Faith, or throw
Yourselves for mercy on the foe,
The renegado base Magued,
Or traitor Julian, worse than dead !
And, as you guard this holy wall,
Guard well your honors' temple all,—
God knows if we have land to save !—
If not,—then better in the grave !
Loyal and true ye've been to me,—
True to my son, till death, were ye ;—
Grieves me, I have no power to prove
My ever true and grateful love,
Save through this effort, peril rife,
To venture thus my worthless life.'
Pelistes, then, each, one by one,
Embraced, as father fond, his son ;
With loving spirit, saddened heart,
As though in death they now did part.
The warriors silent crowded round,
Kissing his hands,—his garment's hem,—
While tears o'er sternest cheeks were found—
And thus he parted there from them.

At silent, grey, and early morn,
Forth from the postern, on his steed,
He issued on that hope-forlorn,
With shield and lance, for coming need.
Just streaked the eastern glimm'ring grey
As slow he paced his lonely way
Through vacant streets, his charger's tramp
Re-echoing to the Moslem camp !
Still, little would suspected be
A single horseman, tranquilly
Wending his way, thus carelessly,
Through armèd town, as enemy !

“ At opening hour, he reached the Gate,
When, entering, it was his fate
A party, foraging, to pass,
With cattle rushing wild ‘ *en masse.*’
Amid the herd and cattle throng,
He safely rode his way along
Unheeded, till without the Gate,
When, at a quickened, rapid rate
He spurred his charger's course aside,
Alas ! not ere full well descried
By Maguèd the renegade,
Who, singly, hot pursuit now made.

“Dashed on Pelistes, on Magued,—
For bush or rock ne’er halting stayed,—
O’er rugged height, through channel dry,
On! on! still dashing onward fly!—
But now, alas! grieves me to tell,—
Pelistes’ charger, stumbling, fell
From top to base of ravine’s height,—
Rider and steed in woful plight!
Pelistes, wounded, bathed in gore,
Successful flight could hope no more,—
His charger maimed,—in quiv’ring fear,—
While Maguèd, the foe, drew near,
Exclaiming,—‘Señor Alcaydè!
Well met, in happy time are we!
My prisoner, now thou’lt humbly yield,
And own me master of the field!’
No answer then Pelistes made
Save drawing of his right good-blade,
With firm, bold bracing of his shield,
That spake,—I die, ere captive yield!
“Desp’rate the conflict that ensued!
Their shields to pieces hacked and hewed,
While armors’ fragments strewn around,
And stained with blood the mossy ground!

Seldom were warriors matched so well—
That of such equal prowess tell !
Who, pausing oft, took breath, and gazed,
Admiringly ! and all amazed,
Each on the other, as they ‘ stayed ’—
The loyal knight and renegade !
To disadvantage fights, howe’er,
Pelistes, in this combat’s share,
For, wounded, he could illy strive,
Which marking, Magued now but sought
To take his noble prey alive,
And weary only, as they fought,
Not slay ;—for weaker still he grew,—
Till kindled all his strength anew,
To strike one brave and single blow !—
’Twas parried well !—when fell he low,
Senseless, and bathed in crimson tide,—
The Renegade fierce by his side,
His foot on fallen lance to rest,
His blade’s point on Pelistes’ breast,
Crying,—‘ Now plead from me thy life ! ’
But that brave knight lay as one dead,
And passed away from mortal strife !—
Unlaced his helmet then, Magued,—
And, resting on the rocky ground,
By Moorish cavaliers was found ;

Who, in Pelistes seeing life,
Now raise him from the scene of strife;
And aiding Magued on his steed,
Back to Cordova slow proceed;
When as the convent pass they by,
The cavaliers their Chief espy,
As, nearly dying, he is borne
Bleeding, and captive, thus forlorn!—
With shouts ‘*To rescue!*’ rush they out,—
But, back repulsed, are put to rout!—
Within the portal of the tower,
Back driven, by superior power,—
Fighting all fiercely side by side,
While blood flows free in crimson-tide,
From court to Altar, aisle to nave,—
Thus struggle still the nobly brave,
Till, in the cloisters grim and grey,
The fallen, dead, and dying, lay!
And, of Pelistes’ faithful band,
Some few died bravely sword in hand,
Others, disabled, pris’ners made,
Were in St. George’s convent laid.

“To bold Pelistes’ prowess brave,
Great reverence the Moslem gave;

And, while their captive, Arab-chiefs
Sought each to cheer his heavy griefs ;
Most kindly strove he should forget
He was their hapless pris'ner yet ;
And, when recovered, courteous gave
A banquet, to their captive brave !

“ In sable armor, sadly borne,
Appeared he there, with visage worn ;
For, evermore his country's ill
With anguish great his heart doth fill !
Among the guests assembled there,
Count Julian high command doth bear,
Enrobed in motley garments vile,
Of Christian and Morisco style.
A close, and bosom friend, had been
Pelistes, to the Count e'er seen,
Through wars of signal bravery,
In happy days of loyalty ;
But, when the Count would him salute,
Pelistes turned in scorn, quite mute !—
Regarding him, through that repast,
As one unknown, until the last.

“ When now the banquet near its close,
With courtesy, the Moslem foes,

Dwell on the merits of the brave,—
The Christians, fallen their land to save!
‘Those who so nobly did defend
Their sacred walls unto the end!’

“Pelistes, silent, bowed his head,—
With lifted voice, then rising, said:—
‘Happy! happy are the dead!
All their cares and sorrows fled!
In peacefulness fore’er to rest—
Happy, they, among the Blest!
For they dwell in realms of joy,—
Earthly strifes no more annoy;—
Their reward, receive they now,
Glorious laurels for the brow!

“‘I could mourn my brethren brave,
But they died their Cross to save!
Glory, honor now their share,
While my country’s woes I bear!
I have seen mine only son,
My joy! my hope! mine idol one!
In his beauty, and my pride,
Falling, martyred, by my side!—

“‘Friends and kindred, followers all,
As the leaves ’neath wild blasts fall,—

Till my tears have ceased to flow,—
All my hopes and joys laid low !

“ ‘ Yet, one there is, for whom I mourn
With never-ceasing grief forlorn !—
The loved companion of my youth,—
The noble heart, of purest truth !
Most loyal of all Christian knights !
Defender of his country’s rights !—
Him find I not ! alas ! alas !
This grief may never from me pass !—
If fall’n in battle, and I knew
Where his loved bones might meet my view,
If bleaching white on Xeres’ plain,
Or deep beneath Quad’lete lain,
I’d seek them out, and fond enshrine
Them as loved patriot-saint of mine ;—
Or, if sad driven from his home,
As exile forced the world to roam,
I’d join him on his hapless way,
O’er foreign lands with him to stray,
Where we, together, e’er might mourn
Our country, of her glory shorn ! ’

“ At this lament, e’en Arab-heart
Was touched, to bear in grief its part !

‘Who was this peerless friend,’ they say,

‘To whom such homage thou dost pay?’

‘*His name,*’ Pelistes answered then,

‘*The name he bore was Julian!*’

The Moslem started with surprise!

‘Brave cavalier,’ each kindly cries,

‘Grief must thy senses dim, we fear—

Behold! the Count before thee here!

Thy friend, thou knowest not! look and see!

Count Julian here doth stand by thee!’

‘Then turned the knight his searching eye

Upon the Count—nor deigned reply,—

Regarding him with lofty air,

That stern, contemptuous scorn doth bear!—

“Darkened Count Julian’s visage now,

Sank his shamed eye in troubled look

Beneath the gaze from that pure brow—

The with’ring scorn, he ill could brook!

Then cried Pelistes,—‘In God’s name,

I charge thee, man unknown!

Darest thou Count Julian so defame?

His name presume to own?’—

Redden’d the Count, with anger deep,—

‘Pelistes! why this mockery keep?’

Thou knowst me as Count Julian well,—
It needs no tongue my name to tell !’

“ ‘ I know thee as Impostor base, !’
Pelistes cried, in deepest scorn,—
‘ Count Julian was of noble race,
A Gothic knight, all purely born ;
Of race, Count Julian, pure and free ;—
But thou,—in mongrel garb I see !
Count Julian was a Christian sworn,
But thou—art Infidel forlorn !—
Count Julian ne’er did wav’ring pause,
But foremost e’er in country’s cause ;
And to his King, loyal and true ;—
A Renegade ! in thee I view !—
Count Julian, living, brave would stand
To strike for Cross, and King, and Land ;
But thou—a hoary traitor art !
That of no country bearest part !
Thy hands are stained with royal blood !
Thy country’s woes roll as a flood
Of dire destruction, death, and blight,
Through thee ! through thee ! thou fier-
night !
Forswearer of thy Land and God !—
Thou worm ! fit only for the sod !

And, thus again, I say to thee,
Thou liest ! O man unknown, to me !—
My friend, alas ! is with the dead !—
And thou, a fiend of hell here fled,
To take possession of his frame,
And desecrate his noble name !
Thou liest ! man unknown ! to me ;
Count Julian, ne'er in *thee* I see !'
And thus, the traitor vile, he spurned,—
Then from the banquet proudly turned,—
Leaving the Count o'erwhelmed with shame !
Scorned e'en by *Arab-chiefs* his name !—
Now weaves my story happy close,—
Escaped Pelistes, each here knows,—
And thus, I pledge that noble knight,
Whose name is crowned with glory bright."

"Thanks !" cry they, "for thy story now,
The chaplet for Pelistes' brow,"
And, as the toast for him goes by,
Rising, all "Vive Pelistes !" cry,
And—"Vive Pelistes !" still doth ring
With "Blessings on our Queen and King !"
As, with cheered hearts for victory bright,
They, leaving, pass the gay "Good-Night."

CANTO X.

THE silv'ry moon ascending now,
Serenely shines on mountain brow,—
With placid beam o'er heath and grove,
Where happy lovers fondly rove ;
Through leafy bowers and vale she played
In mazy, frescoed, light and shade,—
Through the dense chestnut foliage grey,
In glowings soft of mellow ray,
That dancing o'er the ripp'ling stream,
On Deva's bosom glist'ning beam,
And bathe Auseva's cloud-kissed height,
In full, resplendent glory bright.

And sweet was the sleep, that all brightened,—
The Royal, the Fair, and the Brave ;
O'er souls, now of darkness so lightened,
Blest Peace her white pinions doth wave ;

And the calm, dewy twilight of morning
Gleams fair o'er each fresh-wakened soul,—
As blossoms, the mountain adorning,
Ope their leaves to the sunbeams, that stole
Through the mist, and the fleecy cloud rising,
To their loved-ones, the buds and the flowers,
All pure from their heaven-baptizing,
Smiling sweetly in morn's dawning hours.

Fair as Eden, the mountain beams brightly,
While Deva glides vocal in song,
As warm hearts, and gay feet, bounding lightly,
With dance chase the moments along.
And more exquisite now is the shading,
From the mountain-tops glistening in light,
To the woods' leafy hues, darkly fading
In emerald shadows of night ;
While the corn-fields lie far, golden beaming,
'Mid vineyards of purple spread bright,
And the streamlet, that watereth, gleaming
In sunlight, as silver to sight ;
With gardens and orchards fresh blooming
In varied profusion far hence,
Their citron and orange perfuming
The breeze, with their honeyed incense ;—

Till calm steals the mild, glowing evening,
 When glory illumines earth and skies,
 As day, with her gorgeous train leaving,
 In rainbow-hued west, sweetly lies ;
 The heavens, all crimson in splendor,—
 Each object, fair rose-tinted crowned,
 While the soul glows with rapture more ter^{der,}
 Inspired by the Eden around !
 And clear flow the pure, sparkling waters,
 Bespangled with myriad stars play,
 As warriors, with Spain's lovely daughters,
 Entranced in their love-dreams, now stray
 While the nightingale's song to their wooing
 From her bower 'mid the stately palm-tree
 With the dove her accompaniment cooing,
 Fill the mountain with sweet minstrelsy !

So merrily fleet now, the gay mountain-hours,
 Thro' valley, by brooklet, mid wild forest-flowers
 The bow, and the line, and the rebeck, and song
 Winging the light, sylvan moments along ;
 The mimic tourney and bolero's light bound,
 The banquet, where glee and gay toast passes on^{d,}
 The dance in the grove, to the mandolin's tone^{in,}
 Where brightly the moon, with her starry
 shone

O'er the fond whispered vow, 'neath the perfume-
leaved bower

Of the jasmine, and myrtle, and sweet forest-flower ;
While the bulbul still sings, from her breeze swaying
lime,

Her rapturous notes, that to love-pulse keeps time.

The high and the low, alike happy are here,
Afar from all discord, or envy, or fear ;
For the vassals, apart, join in seguidille's song,
As the wild-forest moments flit gayly along ;
While his love ditty carols the dark-browed *Moza*
To his night-eyed *Muchacha*, with tinkling guitar,
And light-hearted couples, all merrily met,
Spring in boundings elastic to gay castanet ;
And the dense chestnut shade, and the drooped
citron-bough,
Shelter sweet stolen kisses, and fond whispered
vow,—

Love reigns in cave-royal, in valley, and grot,
And where is the Heaven where Love reigneth not ?

CANTO XI.

THRICE the moon hath risen now,
Kissing fair Auseva's brow ;
Thrice sweet evening dew-drops rest
In the lily's chalice'd breast ;
And thrice the morning sun hath smiled
Upon the opening blossoms wild ;—
Thrice the matin-anthems ring
From joyous lark on dew-tipped wing,—
When Queen, and Maiden-flow'rets, bright
As bird or blossom of the wild,
Are warned to plume their wings for flight
From groves that have so long beguiled
Their souls in sweet Elysium ;
And as the startling word doth come ;—
“ When morning star shall next arise
We leave our Mountain-Paradise

The distant foe afar to seek ! ”
Paled, suddenly, each maiden-cheek !
At sound that flushed the warrior-band,
And bright their patriot soul-flame fanned.
Rejoiced, they from Count Eudon learned,
“ *The foe, that for new conquest burned,
Had turned them toward the east afar,*”
When now might rise Spain’s morning star !
Thus kindly, Heaven hath opened way,
Asturia ! for thy dawning day !
Oviedo ! Leon ! soon to ring
With “ Hail Pelayo, conquering King ! ”

Spake to the band Pelayo then,
“ My brave and true Asturian men,
Raise now your good-swords yet once more
Upon fair Esla’s murm’ring shore,
For lo ! Count Eudon true doth bring
The Watchword we full soon shall ring
’Neath Leon’s rampart craftily
As Moors, from mountain-victory !
For little ken the biding there,
The watery grave their brethren share
’Neath Deva, chanting gay refrain
In joyously triumphant strain !

And ‘*Alla Akbar!*’ wide shall ope
Old Leon’s gates,—that we may cope,
In easy conflict with the Moor,
Successful battle—conquest sure!—
For Muza unto Afric’s sands
Hath drawn his horde of Arab bands,—
Thus, vantage take we, to regain
Just rights o’er Leon and our Spain.
Too long our fair inheritance
The base foe hold,—now, Muza hence
In foreign wars,—we’ll ‘Beard his den’
To plant our Leon high again!
Bright on the trampled soil of Spain
We’ll raise the Spanish throne again;
And, through Favila’s native line,
Spain’s royal sceptre yet shall shine!

“Then burnish falchions, one and all,
Brilliant to gleam at ‘Battle-call,’—
‘*Santiago! Leon!*’ ring the cry,
‘*Vengeance! for Spain we’d bravely die!*’
Our Country’s star now riseth bright!
Wanes low the Crescent, ’neath the light
Of Holy Cross—right soon to sink
In night—while we morn’s glory drink!”

Listened the crowd in silent hush,—
But now arose o'er rock and brush,
Up mountain-height, a ringing shout !
Again, again, the cheer pealed out !
That told Pelayo well the tale
How strong the hearts of Deva's Vale ;
And how, still boldly strike would they,
When called again to battle fray !

Cried they, " Viva ! Chieftain ! King !—
He, as Bird of Jove, shall wing
From his eagle eyrie height,
Brightly now, victorious flight,—
Swooping o'er foul ravens vile,
That, polluting, dark defile
Spain's pure homes and Cross of light,
With their impious deeds of night !
' *Alla Akbar !* ' shall unfold
Leon's Gates, to sons of old,
' *Techir yell* ' and ' *Lelie cry* '—
Ever from Oviedo die !
" Lo ! the avenging hour draws nigh
When routed Moors shall scattered fly
From Christian walls ! while from our home,
As Israel's sons, no more we roam.

Rejoice ! brave, suff'ring sons of Spain !—
Rejoice ! your land ye'll soon regain !
Lift up your heads, ye hill-tops high !—
Spain's hour of glory draweth nigh ! ”

Again the shout rose far on high
Piercing the azure-vaulted sky ;
Again the welkin full doth ring
“ Viva Pelayo ! Leon's King ! ”
And quick the buckler, gorget, shield,—
And armor's suit for battle-field,
Prepare the Brave, whose mountain-life
Exempt had been from garb of strife ;
For now the 'vengeful hour draws nigh,
Wherein Spain's future fate doth lie ;
And eager, sanguine hope pervades
All hearts in mountain-groves and glades ;
Hope, with her cheering radiance blest,
Doth soothe each fear of ill to rest,—
And, with contagious influence, cast
Her rosy tinge o'er forest vast,
Inspiring ardor freshly new,
As bright the future beams to view !
And hast'ning feet and hurried sound,
Of human voices echoing round,

Speak of the morrow's parting-day,—
The onward march,—the battle-fray.
With zeal renewed, each mountaineer
Glowing with hope,—in happy cheer,
Reflecteth joy with kindled eye,
As draws the hour of battle nigh !

Apart, the King roves with his Bride
O'er cherished scenes of mountain-side ;
To ev'ry grove, and stream, and dell,
Bidding a sadly-fond farewell !
Sweet memories, culling here and there,
In leaflet dear and blossom fair,
To breathe afar of bridal bliss,
Passed in their forest-wilderness.

Thus sped the day,—now in the west
The crimson waves of sunset rest,
When clear the silver bugle-call
Rings out for vesper-prayer to all,
Where Bridal Vow, and Regal rite,—
Ovation passed,—where now, this night,
Each shriven,—Blessing yet must fall
Upon the assembled warriors all—
In that fair grove, whence they repair
For evening hymn and holy prayer.

Again full swells the solemn chant,
While sunny beams fall bright aslant
O'er infant head, and maiden tress,
And brave men's brow, as though to bless
All, in this parting, sacred hour,
With promise of God's loving power.

Around the Altar now doth stand
Urban, with Prelates of the Band ;—
Centerio, awaiting there,
In holy rituals to share.
Rev'rent, amid the assembled host,
The King and Queen appear foremost,—
And, ranged within the circles three,
As rank befits, the troops we see.

Pure lilies, on the Cross still shone,—
Who will re-place when fair hands gone ?
Bright trickles still the silvery shower
O'er Altar's sides and clinging flower,—
While low before that moss-grown shrine
The Regal couple now incline ;—
Prayers, sacred rites, fond Blessing given,—
And Royal souls are fully shriven.

With Crucifix in hand upraised,
Urban exclaims,—“ Now God be praised !

Son of a heroed race ! O King !
That thou, in lawful line, mayst bring
Unto the Royal throne of Spain
Again pure Gothic blood to reign ;
Restoring to thine own their right,—
Sceptre unstained, and Cross of Light !—
God crown thee with all blessings bright !
God bless thee, Queen ! Star of our night !
Guide Thou, O Lord ! unto Spain's throne,
The Royal pair we proudly own ! ”

To osier throne they now are led,—
While still the Primate o'er each head
God's blessing prays, and in His name,
To souls repentant, grants the same.
And prayers Centerio doth say—
Shriven, assoyled in full are they,
The Band, who now through twilight air
Breathe forth their last, sweet vesper-prayer ;—
And to the influence of the hour
Their hearts attuned, from Circlet Bower,
With pensive thoughts and mind subdued,
They wend their way through forest-wood.

And this the last, last happy rest
Within Auseva's shelt'ring breast !

O children ! saddened now are ye,
Passing from stream, and flower, and tree !
The dreamy, ripp'ling, soothing stream,
 The fragrant mountain-blossoms bright,
The hazel groves, where moonbeams gleam
 O'er hearts all bathed in love's delight !
While warbles to his own dear rose,
 Sweet bulbul, strain of pathos deep,
That on the soul entrancing flows,
 And senses in fair love-dreams steep.
Oh ! sad ye wake from sylvan-dreams,
Where all of joy and peace so beams,
To clash of sabre, battle-day,
Where frightful discord beareth sway !
Dream on,—for yet ye'll wake to light,
To dawning day of glory bright !
Awake to see the Crescent wane
Beneath the Cross of rising Spain !

CANTO XII.

FAIR breaks the dawn in eastern skies,
High doth the lark toward heaven rise,
Bright wake the souls of mountain-band,
With forest-birds, by zephyrs fanned,—
Blusheth the day on mountain-side,—
Calm lie the valleys far and wide,—
And silence rests all sweetly still
O'er leafy dale and rocky hill.

But up and stirring is the camp
For onward march,—for battle-tramp ;
And maidens, as rose-leaves, unfold
Their lily-lids on mountain-wold.

Astir the troop with ardor's fire,
Astir the woods' inspirèd choir,

Astir fair maids, as gleams of light,—
Astir each stream, in rippling bright ;
And all is life in cave and vale—
Donning of robe and coated-mail,
And many a matin briefly said
By warrior brave, and gentle maid.

For they must leave ! and all things bright
Seem grieving o'er the mountain flight !
The lark arose with mournful cry,—
The breeze seems murmuring its sigh,—
Deep shadows lie on mountain-breast,—
Tremble the trees in sad unrest ;—
Sweet blossoms raise their eyes of light
Glittering with dewy tear-drops bright,—
And dew-drops, too, in maidens' eyes,
As Angels, leaving Paradise ;
And brave knights turn with deep-drawn sigh
From happy groves of trysting, nigh.

And Zillah bright ! sad hour is this
That calls from rosy bower of bliss !
From bird, and tree, and stream, and flower,
So cherished through Love's happy hour !—
And e'en the monarch's eye grows dim
Turning from spot so dear to him,—

Scene of his highest, greatest bliss,
His Bower of Bridal happiness !
Where, in his hour of gloomy night,
Beamed o'er his way his star of light !
His soul to cheer, to gladden life
Through days of peace, to battle-strife,—
When far from pomp and state away,
Love reigned with free unfettered sway,—
Unfolded full his pinions white,
Within their breasts, of pure delight.

And now, in truth, brief time have they
In sacred grove High Mass to say ;—
But ere they leave, beneath pure Heaven,
In Eucharist, there solemn given,
The blessed bread they all partake,—
And thus their peace with Heaven make,
The faithful, rev'rent, Christian flock,
Low bending round the Altar-rock.

Solemn swells the matin prayer,
Sweetly float on morning air
Parting strains of harmony,
Minor notes of minstrelsy !

Soon, loud the silver bugle-call
For mustering and gath'ring all !

And quick appear 'neath chestnut tree
The "Flower of Spanish Chivalry."

The standard bearer, with his Leon-fold,
And valiant men, in ordered columns bold,
Stand resolute, with hearts' proud beat,
Impatient all the foe to meet.—
Proudly the war-steed of Pelayo King,
Tosses his rich-maned head with stately fling,
Strikes with uneasy hoof the mossy ground,
And neighing, champs the bit and gazes round,
As he would say—"Now haste, the foe to meet,
Eager am I to crush them 'neath the feet,—
To nobly bear my gallant Chief along,
And fearless face the invading turban'd throng!"
And Gomez holds his master's lance,
And helm, and shield, with earnest glance
Of loving zeal, and ardent glow,
To meet again the Moslem foe.

Now, with their train, draw on apace
The King majestic,—Queen of grace,—
Bright harbingers of brilliant day,
Their only hope through troublous way.—
Armed was the Chief, from head to feet,—
Accoutred well, the foe to meet ;

While burnished helm, and milk-white plume,
As snowy wreath, his brow illume ;—
“Liege-Ladyes,” matrons, maidens fair,
With old and young, are gathered there ;
And “Men at Arms,” with lance and spear,
Bring up the column’s glittering rear.

Now on the mossy cliff they stand,
Ready for march, the accoutred band ;—
And—“*Forward!*”—on their way they go,
Winding the mountain-path below.
Fierce war-steeds neigh, to bugle blown,
While casque, and shield, and gorget shone
Glistening through oak and hazel green,
With pennons broad, of crimson sheen ;
Visor, and helm, and crest of knight,
With corslet’s steel, all burnished bright,
And battle-axe, as silver now,
Gleam through each waving forest-bough.

With sad “*Farewell*” they turn from bowers
Of Eden beauty, where fair flowers
Of love and joy had sweetly decked
Their hearts’ pure altar, when, home-wrecked,
They found, in mountain-haven blest,
A sanctuary of Heavenly rest,—

Within fair Nature's sheltering arm,
From cruel foes, a refuge calm.

Thus, to notes of deep sadness, "*Adieu*" they now
sing,
In fond, plaintive strains that with clear echoes ring,
As cygnet's sweet tone doth all mournfully swell,
Its sad dirge at parting—in loving farewell.

FAREWELL TO THE MOUNTAIN.

Farewell to the Mountain! farewell to the grove!
No longer your pathways we merrily rove!—
Oh! will ye, sweet valleys, thus blooming smile on,
When we, your fond children, are far from you
gone?

No tear for your loved ones! no sigh now have ye,
For those who are weeping their farewell to thee?
Bear ye no softer heart than your white marble rock,
That may mourn for the loss of your fair mountain-
flock?

Or smile ye to comfort and cheer our sad way,
With hope of return, on some bright future day

With the Leon upraised, and the Spanish Crown old
On the brow of Pelayo, to Aùseva's fold?

Where children of Spain to their mother's breast
flocked,

And in her fair cradle, all gently was rocked
The infant of Freedom,—sweet Liberty's child,—
In her Monarchy's cradle,—the blest mountain-wild.

Oh! yes, when we've parted, ye'll sigh in the breeze,
And murmur in streamlet, and moan through the
trees;

And your tears will flow fast down your lone moun-
tain-side

For the loss of your King and his fairy Queen-Bride!

For the light will be gone, and the beautiful fled,
And your flow'rets, all drooping, will mournfully
shed

Their tear-drops of dew, and their incense of grief,—
While only they bloom in the blessed belief

That, as morning re-beams, after night's dreary hour,
Their lights will return, brightly risen in power,
To smile on their children, grove, blossom, and
stream,

That lightened their sorrows with beauteous beam.

And ne'er would we stray from Elysium so fair,
The hollow delights of a court-life to share,
But sad, captive brethren, and country's loud call
Admonish that pleasure is not here our all.

Then, sweet Vale of Deva, all fondly, fore'er,
Thy name in our hearts' deep recesses we'll bear,—
And oft, to thy dear, precious bosom will flee
In annual pilgrimage here unto thee.

From trammels of court-life, and coffers of care,
To Nature's calm rest, and the wild woods repair,—
In Nature's majestic cathedral to raise
Our joyful "*Te Dèum*" of heart grateful Praise !

And young infant heroes, we'll hither, too, bring,
To mark well Ausevâ, whose valley did ring
With "*Alla il Alla*," and wild "*Techir yell*,"
Covedanga, where Ishma'l's dark Arab-sons fell !

Where the Cross of Salvation on high shineth bright,
Fair encased in our Syrian steel-blades of light !
And many a crescent, deep eaten with rust,
'Neath Christian's light tread, lieth low in the dust !

Yes, here often our fair sylvan court we will hold,
With brave knights, and fair maidens, in Druid
groves old,

Bright as Dryad, or Oread nymphs e'er were seen,
Or Titania's fairies on mystical green.

Now blossoms of brightness they lovingly place
On bosoms as pure as the flow'rets that grace,—
Memorials, evermore fondly to wear,
As amulet-charm, from their Eden-bowers fair.

And as our first Parents from Paradise bowers,
Turn they, from the scene of their past happy hours;
“We leave thee! we leave thee!” they mournfully
cry—

“And grieve we! and grieve we!” seems echo's
reply!

And downward now their course they wend,
Through winding paths and myrtle bowers;
Turning full oft, again to send

Yet one more glance, where joyous hours
Of untold happiness had fled!

Where, from fond souls, Love's ray had shed
Its halo o'er each blooming spot,

Whose breezes sigh,—“*Forget me not!*”

To each loved flower, and bird, and brook,

Grove, hill, and dreamy hazel dell,

The heath blown cliff, and mossy nook,

To all,—a sadly fond farewell!

A fair, goodly sight was that bold cavalcade !
King, Queen, and brave warriors, and fair, gentle
 maid,
And grey-beards, and matrons, and tender young
 child,
Priests, fathers, and prelates, and grave bishops
 mild,
All mounted, and houselled, and dight for the way,
That leadeth to Spain's happy, long promised day !—
Palfrey, war-steed, and mule, as in rank they belong,
Fill up the quaint whole of that strange, motley
 throng !

The King, on his charger, majestic was borne,
With trappings that silver and gold rich adorn,
With the star of his soul, his life's dearest delight
By his side, closely guarded, on palfrey of white,
While float her loose tresses as golden rays fair,
In bright sunny beams, to the fresh morning air ;
Her father, and Inez, and Gomez all near,
Urbino, Centerio, " Liege-ladyes " dear.
Ad'lides, or guidesmen, lead cautious advance,
While follow bold heroes to fiery steeds' prance ;
Severian, Odear, Pelistes, close seen,
With Alphonse ever near his beloved King and
 Queen ;

And liege-men and vassals still hast'ning along,—
A loving, and ardent, united brave throng !
Asturians, Chieftains, and staunch mountain-band—
The saviours of Spain,—their sad, down-trodden land !

Thus winding the pathway that fair cavalcade,
Their banners and pennons in sunbeams displayed,
While falchion and shield bears each bold cavalier
In radiant file, with the lance and the spear ;
And glisten their arms in the morn's rosy light,—
Flash armor and helmet all glittering bright,
Floats light on the breeze, their white plumes' wav-
ing play,
As windeth the band down its last mountain way.

CANTO XIII.

No longer deep the boulder's shade
O'er their wild pathway densely laid ;
But openings fair of gentle slope,
Where sunny rays the shadows broke,
And glades of smiling light were seen
Spread bright in hues of varied green,
By hazel skirted rich, where twine
Clematis and the wild-rose vine ;
And on the brooklet's bosom play
Bright diamond drops in silv'ry spray,
Where droops the willow fair, to lave
Her tresses in the dancing wave ;
And aspens bend in quiv'ring beam
With waving grace to sip the stream ;
While on her sparkling current's play,
Floats, now and then, a blossom stray,
That, bending from its sylvan nook
To steal *one* dew-drop from the brook,

Drawn from its peaceful home away
O'er depths where smiling sunbeams play,
Is borne upon the rolling tide
In merry, floating, dancing glide ;
Till now, where swifter current flows,
The flow'ret on its bosom glows,
Far from its sister blossoms dear
Sad drifting off toward waves of fear,
Where, 'mid the foaming torrent's leap,
'Tis lost beneath the whirling deep !—
And such is wrongful Pleasure's wile,
That, falsely luring, doth beguile
The pure young soul to gently sip
Her beaming cup,—ere long to dip
Farther and deeper still in sin,
Till waves of vice the frail one win
To waters dark, where, misery tossed,
That spirit pure, at length,—is lost !

Thus many a forest stream they past,
And many a leafy dale,
In windings of the mountain vast
Through Deva's quiet vale ;
Streams, whose clear waters sparkling bright
From depths of untold purest ore,

Roll up their golden sands to light
In glitt'ring waves, upon the shore.

Still guideth e'er the King his Bride
In gentle pace close by his side,
With loving word and tender gaze,
Through rocky steep and flowery maze.—
“Light of my way! how glows my soul
With rapture's fire, that to the goal
Of earthly life, in thy dear smile
I may each care and grief beguile!
Thus quaffing joy-beams from thine eyes—
Mine angel strayed from Paradise!
To whose fair gates, thou, Star of light
'Mid sea of storms in threat'ning night!
Wilt cheer with ever constant ray,
As hast thou, love, since that bright day
When first thou blest my weary path—
My sun-beam! 'mid dark scenes of wrath.”
“Content am I,” sweet murmured she,
“Angelic, e'er to seem to thee;
But Cupid sure hath charmed thee blind,
In me, Celestial bride to find!
In sooth, thine eyes I would not ope
My faults to see,—but ever hope

To be, whate'er thou deemest right,
And through thy praise become more bright
In all of good, in all of true,—
To be, all that I seem, to view ;
And prove thy star of joy thus e'er,—
Thy griefs dispel, or fondly share.—
If love alone may gild thy way,
'Twill beam effulgent as the day
Through my heart's-flame,—that ever burns
Alone for thee,—to thee e'er turns ;
For as the sunshine of my soul
Art thou to me ! my joy, the whole,—
As flower, I live within thy light,—
Apart from thee, must die 'neath blight
Of hapless misery and woe !
And thus, I tremble much to know
Again from me thou turn'st away,
Thy life to risk in battle-fray !
Oh ! what this blooming earth to me,
Or scarcely Heaven afar from thee !—
A darkened planet,—sphere of night,—
Without thy rays of loving light ! ”

“ Ne'er could I hide, sweet Bride ! from thee,
The joy thy words impart to me !

For I would be the ray, the sun
My Flower should seek,—her only one.
But still, must e'er my precious Dove
Remember there is One above
Who, list'ning to the raven's cry,
Will never pass my dove-cote by!—
Or darkly frown on birdling there,
To droop her pinions, pure and fair,
With anguished grieving for lost mate,—
Leaving her widowed, desolate!
For God hath still a work to do,
His Wisdom great, will carry through;
And I, his humble instrument,
Must bide until my summons sent;
And thou, an arrant coward one
To weep ere Heaven high hath won
For us our Cross,—her throne for Spain,
And sacred wall and tower again;
And thou, Queen of my life and soul!
With me, attain the highest goal
Of earthly honor, human power,—
Our heritage, of regal dower!
Then, daughter of a noble race!
Quick ev'ry recreant tear-drop chase,
And summon back the radiant smile,
That doth my every care beguile."

In converse fond thus journey they
With unremitting, rapid speed,
Where Sella's, Ana's waters play,
And tributary streams, that feed
Deva's and Ova's rushing tide,
And Asta, that doth sparkling glide
Far to the deep blue western sea,
Toward rolling waves of majesty.

And deem not we, our Pair, I trow,
The only hearts that loving bow
Beneath the sway of Cupid's bow
In rapturous and tender glow !
For brave knights guide with mailed glove
The palfrey-reins of "Ladye Love,"
And bright, from eyes of fair ones, glance,
Rays, that all powerful as the lance,
Pierce keenly, closely armored breast,
To leave the dart therein to rest !
A hopeless wound, all deeply sure,
That cunning skill may never cure !
And, as the badge of conquered heart,
Each warrior bears in loving part,
His "Ladye's Favoure" there as crest
Upon the war-plate of his breast.

Not merciless, fair tyrant foe!—
But deign to soothe the heart-felt woe
Of fallen knight within her power,
Ere yet the grievous parting hour;
For know they n^ot how next they meet,—
In Coat of Mail, or Winding Sheet!
Thus, fondest vows are fully made
In wand'rings through the forest-shade.

Thus wend they all their way along,
In gay discourse,—with gentle song
Of cheering strain, or olden tale,
As pass they from the Mountain-vale.
And bright the wild-rose twineth now
Acacia hedge and hazel bough;
While sweet the warbling linnet's lay
Enlivens through the live-long day.

And here beams dawning happiness!
For Hope has raised her light, to bless
With promise bright of liberty,
And thus all passes cheerily;—
On rosy wings, to sanguine hearts
The moments flit;—with passing fear,
Returning peace gleams forth again,
O'er vineyard, olive-grove, and plain,—

Hope smileth now, while fading grief
Dissolves as mist, or snowy wreath,
Beneath her sunny influence bright
To bathe all nature fair in light.

And clear glistening Asta, as morning doth wake,
Shines bright in the sun's glancing play,
That kisses her bosom's blue shimmering break
'Mid flashes of diamond spray.
And hamlet, and villa, and castellate towers,
Rest dreamy in Morn's gentle ray,
While lustrous green meadows, and rich ilex bowers,
Beam fair in the blushing of day.
Through winding moss-paths, hedged with pomegra-
nate's glow,
And dense olive-woods, does their way blithely go ;
Where vineyards o'er valley and hill spread to view,
With glimpsing cortijos* of white peeping through ;
While vintagers busy are culling in glee
The clear, purple pendants, as picture to see,
When droop the rich clusters from basketed head
Of vintner, returning with firm, graceful tread.
Thus day passes brightly to travellers now,
As wind they 'neath myrtle and broad chestnut
bough,

* Farmhouse.

With occasional rest in the calm citron bowers,
And fruit to refreshen the long journeyed hours—
For berries or fruit surely lack they not here,
Where temptingly glow they forever quite near ;
And pure gushing rills in the sun's merry shine,
To freshen and gladden still sweeter than wine.

As eve draws apace, and gray shades of the west
Are length'ning, more brightly the scene still is
drest ;

In fair sunset beauty all glowing the plain
With waving spread carpet of rich golden grain,
Groves of fig, lime, and citron, with orange buds
white,

Pomegranate, deep blushing in crimsoning light ;
The shimmering aspen, date, almond-tree seen
All smiling arrayed in the rare sunset-sheen.

Bright riseth now the evening star,
While sinks the western sun afar ;
On homeward way, the muleteer
Whistles o'er hill in merry cheer ;
And peasants blithe, and goat-herds gay
Return from well-spent laboring day ;
And Spaniards breathe all newly free
In hope of speedy liberty !

And light mantilla's graceful spread
Falls o'er Muchacha's* braided head,
As fondly now she hastes to meet
Her lover, 'neath the acacia sweet.

And oft, clear ripp'ling streams they've passed,
And oft a sunny dale,
Since Deva's waters gleamed their last
From out her lovely vale ;
While orange grove, and fruited tree,
And teeming blossomed vine,
Still ever gladden cheerily
Their road's extended line.

Again they rest, as sunbeams fade,
'Neath chestnut's calm repose,
Where nestles sweetly in the glade,
The violet with the rose.
Again the mossy bank's gay cheer,
Where pears, bright cherries shine
From orchards richly laden near,
With fruit of drooping vine ;—
Their panniers, gen'rous stored, full rife,
With all collation's share,

* Peasant girl.

And thus, in merry wild-wood life,
Partake they sylvan fare.

Now, all refreshed, again they rise,
Their journey to resume ;
While lightly gay each moment flies,
That love and joy illumine,—
Through woods and where the brooklets trill,
O'er purple heath, their way,
With unslack'd speed, they onward still,
Till twilight fair doth lay
Her gentle mantle o'er the land
With soothing influence blest,—
Her fresh'ning breezes, soft and bland,
On soul and brow to rest.
The hour of holy vesper calm,
When evening dew's inspiring balm
Bathes leaf and flower,—as doth the soul
Angelic influence' sweet control,—
The hour, when sacred vespers call
The soul to commune with its God ;—
But on the ear no bell doth fall,
No sound, save steed's-tramp o'er the sod,
Or rushing sweep of feathered wing,—
In forest-bird's swift darting flight,

That buzzing past the ear doth ring,
Toward sheltered nest in wild affright
Lest strange invaders seek his home,
His dear ones drive from rest secure,
All shelterless the wild to roam,—
As Christians—scattered by the Moor.

And though no altar now have they
Round which, on bended knee, to pray,
To starry heav'ns they lift their eyes,
Where myriad orbs of glory rise,
And breathe their *Avés* sweet, that float
On evening breeze, in chanted note,
Through boundless space of azure fair,
To Heaven as incense rising there ;
While calm the silvr'y moon her light
Now sheds to cheer the wanderers' sight,
O'er glist'ning armor's steel to play
In softly glancing, mellow ray.

And through the eve still hasten they
With quick'ning speed, their way along,
Bright fire-flies sparkling in their way,
The bulbul cheering with her song ;
Till now the Convent's cross they spy
Near—rising in the soft moonlight

From hazel grove, where calm doth lie
That hermitage,—oasis bright
To weary souls, and weary head,
That fain would rest from lengthened way,
With unremitting ardor sped
Throughout fatiguing journey's day.

List! clear from out that dreamy dell
The echoing tones of midnight bell!
Naught breaking else the stillness sweet,
Of monastery's blest retreat.
And here, calm refuge now must find
Maid, matron, infant, left behind
To await the band's advancing stroke,
That soon shall break the Moslem yoke,
And open Leon's portals wide,
To ushur in, with loving pride,
The fair, and innocent, and bright,
To fully reinstated right.
The silence of that midnight hour
Lay as a spell on grove and bower,—
And on the souls of all most blest,
In this calm sanctu'ry of rest.

Now enter they the convent hall
As friars pass to midnight prayer;

And, greetings passed, join one and all
In altar's orisons to share,—
“*Te Deum*” and “*Laudamus*” sing,
For God's great mercies to their Band,
Through perils all,—Who saved their King
To raise again their fallen Land.

And soon the welcome cheer is spread
Upon the friar's oaken board,
Where Royal Pair and suite are led,—
While all the mountain horde
Are well supplied in kindly care,
And lib'ral, with the choicest fare
That fills the larder of the good
And Reverend, Holy Brotherhood.

Now, “Fathers,” eager list the tale
Of Christian conquest in the Vale
Of Deva fair, whose crystal flood
All purple grew with Moorish blood;
And of the coming battle-fray,—
How, Muza having far away
To Eastern shores his Host now sent,
On farther conquest fiercely bent,
The hour for vengeance full arrived!
Each soul prepared, assoyled, and shrived,—

The Pass-word theirs, that wide shall swing
Old Leon's Gates, with "*Akbar*" ring
To open to the Christian throng
The portals of her rampart strong;—
Where, once within those walls, full sure
Destruction to the Invading Moor!
And Hope smiles o'er the cheerful board,
 And Hope smiles o'er the vassals all;
Hope whispers,—Soon shall fall the horde,
 And Spain arise from tyrant thrall!

Now weary ones seek night's repose,
 For at the morrow's dawning hour
Depart the Brave, to seek their foes—
 To fell the Usurper in his power;—
Leaving them there,—Fair, Weak, and Dear,—
 Within the monastery fold,
Safe from all harm, or chance of fear,—
 With friars grave and fathers old.

Not free from grief each gentle heart,—
 Not free from care each Warrior bold,—
Thus from his Loved and Fair to part;—
 To loose the white arms' twining fold,
Deeming, perchance 'tis now the last
 Ere Death his cold embrace shall give!—

For who may say,—Through perils vast—
Through conflict dire—safe shall I live?
But sleep at length falls o'er pure brow
That on brave bosom resteth now;
And slumber sweet doth for a while,
Oblivious, warrior souls beguile;
Wrapped in their dreams of varied hue,—
Mazes of chequered web, wrought through,—
“Love,—partings sad,—and grief,—and fight,—
Vict'ry!—return!”—they pass the night;
Till full, clear tones of matin-bell
A double summons startling tell!
And trembling pulse, and heart's quick beat,
Speak of the moments passing fleet,
Ere severed, hearts of love and fear,
For all on earth,—or bright or drear!—
Perchance for woe! perchance for weal!—
Sad! sad rang out that matin peal!

Brief moments, ere morn's dawning ray
Piercing aslant the oriel pane,
In varied hues prismatic lay
On suppliant forms, low bowed again
Around the holy chancel's pale,
The Prelate's blessing to receive,

With prayers that God will never fail,
Or in their coming peril leave
His children, struggling for their Cross,
Their Land, and Homes again,
And guard and save them each from loss,
And raise their trampled Spain.

Now the King before the crowd
Raises clear his voice aloud :—
“Asturians! Spaniards! Christian men!
Heroes of Covadonga’s glen!
Yet again your arms ye rise
For your Land, that darkened lies
’Neath the yoke of foreign power,
Waiting for the coming hour,
Freighted with the zeal inspired
That hath erst your valor fired!
Biding for the blow to fall,—
At the ‘Leon battle-call,’—
That shall break her heavy chain,
Bringing freedom, peace again,
To each altar, home, and wall!—
Liberty and joy to all!—
Well and nobly have ye fought!
Bravely, on our Xeres’ plain!

Eager, e'en with life 'twere bought,
Bold to strike for Cross and Spain !

“ Onward ! in the name of God !
For your Cross and native sod !
He who face, doth forward fall,
We will bear his earth-sins all.”

Now the Bishop chanteth Mass,
Ere to combat dire they pass ;
Shriven and assoyled are they,—
Houselled, for the battle-fray !

CANTO XIV.

OH! sad were the partings and bitter the tears,
Of the brave and the lovely, 'mid hopes and 'mid
fears!—

And in calm hazel grove, 'neath the green myrtle
bower,

Severed fond Royal lovers at morn's blushing hour;
Close clasped to that heart where the fair silken tress
Still lay as his amulet ever to bless,

His charm and his guard from each ill and each foe,
That tress from his Angel of earth here below—

Fair Zillah, his blessing, his star-light of life!

With heart strung to terror at near coming strife!

And heaven-hued orbs gazing deep in his own,
All anguished, from lids where the welling tears
shone,—

Sad moaning, 'mid sobbing of grief's bitter flow:—

“Pelayo! my life-pulse!—Oh! bitter the woe

That bears thee again from my gaze far away,
To peril thy life in the wild hateful fray! * * *
Oh! thine honor is precious,—thy fame dear to me!
But rather the flower-decked 'Muchacha' I'd be,
With thee, Love, as Muzo,* in rustic-life wed,
Than a thorn-woven diadem piercing my head,—
For each hour we are severed is thorn-fraught to
me,—

No blossom, thou absent, in life I may see,—
But trembles with terror, thy sad, drooping bride,
Each moment, when parted, dear love! from thy
side!"

"Oh! speak thus forever, my loved one!" he sighed;
"My soul's star! my blessing! my Heaven-sent
bride!

Thus ever, for aye, would I still be the light
To illumine thy soul and dispel sorrow's night!
But cheer thee, mine Angel! my star-light of hope!
For easy the battle thine own Love shall cope,—
Ay, easy the conquest and brilliant the hour
That shall crush the dark yoke of the stern Moslem
power;

And better by far, love, thou know'st it to be,
That Christians should conquer and Spaniards be free;

* A Peasant.

And thou, bearing *roseate* crown, my brave Queen,
The sceptre should wield of sweet Love's purest
sheen ;—

That we 'neath *Love's* diadem calmly should glide
Down the stream of our fortune, all wisely to guide
The helm of our country,—lead ever through love
Our nation in peace to the bright realms above,
Than '*Muzo, Muchacha,*' all useless to be
In sphere never marked for our high destiny,
While Spain, our loved Spain, in her chains lying low,
Her Christians a scoff to the impious foe ! — ”

“ Nay ! glory I, love,” doth she fondly exclaim,
“ Full well in thine own and our dear country's
fame,—

And so Heaven in mercy but spareth thy life,
I'll bravely still bid thee—‘ God-speed ’ to the strife ! ”

“ God bless thee ! God bless thee ! my brave one ! ”
he cried,—

“ God bless thee ! God bless thee ! ” she sadly re-
plied ;—

One close-clinging kiss, one heart-pressed embrace,—
Fond kisses again on that tear-bedewed face,—
And Zillah,—poor Zillah ! is weeping alone !—
The light of her life now departed, and gone !

Half fainting, she lies on the mossy bank there,—
'Mid flow'rets,—a sad stricken lily,—as fair !

Soon mounted, the King, with his brave Christian
throng,

From the court of the convent now moveth along ;
The Royal and Bold, stanch to "Beard in their den"
The Moslem-Invaders and fierce Arab-men.

Forth they pass in glitt'ring file,—
Falling on them now the while
Loving glance from mournful eyes
Where the glist'ning tear-drop lies.
Sad, her bower of myrtle through,
Zillah doth the cortége view ;
Ranks of burnished armor's sheen,
Sad beholds, through branches green,
As their light'ning flashes broke
Through the waving elm and oak,
Gleaming on her pure young brow,
Blanched with grievous terror now !—
Snowy plume and helmet-crest,
Honor's star, on knightly breast,—
Dazzling streams of lance and spear,
Glist'ning in the sun-light clear.

Most noble, 'mid the gallant throng,
Her Royal Chief,—borne proud along
On Rod'rick's charger, happily found
Wand'ring over Xeres' battle-ground,
And led unto the convent-glen,—
Sad relic to her Holy men!
Who gently tend the steed forlorn
That mortal since hath never borne
Until this morn, when liege-men lead
Unto their Chief the noble steed,—
And to the King of Leon's line
The royal charger thus resign.

'Twould seem he felt his master's race!—
Arching his neck, with martial pace
So proudly leading forth his way,
As fierce again for battle-fray.
Majestic, sooth, the war-horse trod,
As deeming that he bore some god
Of earth, or kingly hero bold,
As erst he moved, in times of old!
For thus, through many a battle-day,
Don Rod'rick bore he, 'mid the fray,—
His regal master, grand to sight!
Through oft-repeated, deadly fight,—

With curving neck, and milk-white mane,
And tossing head, that all marked well,
So proud on Xeres' battle plain,
Until his Royal master fell!

And then, alas! 'neath fortune's frown,
He laid him by that master down!
At length by Christian sons was found
That Royal form, sad wand'ring round!

With grief, Pelayo's heart had bled
When thus to him the steed was led,—
Poor relic of Don Roderick's pride,
Last seen by Chrysus' crimson tide!
Exclaimed he then:—"Poor, faithful steed!
The kingly hand, that erst did feed
And cherish thee,—oft led thee on
To conflict's field,—is powerless,—gone!
But fear thou not—*still*, master kind,
And tender care thou yet shalt find,—
My brave Orelia! noble steed!
That proved so true in hour of need!"

As though his words the charger knew,
All fondly closer still he drew,
And on the shoulder of the King
His head reclined, sad whinnying.

And now, he proudly bears again
A King, to combat for his Spain!
And as of old, breaks spirit high
In prancing hoof and fire-lit eye.

* * * * *

“My love! my life!” exclaimed the Queen,
As gallant passing, thus was seen,
Her Lord and Chief to peril dire,—
To rouse the sleeping tiger’s ire;—
“Grant, grant thy war-trained steed may bear
Thee safely through the battle’s share,
And speed thee to mine arms, sweet life!—
Safe, safe, from horrid combat’s strife!
Nor masterless again return!
O God! let not that sight e’er burn
Within mine heart,—within my brain!
Better, by far, I lifeless lain
Amid the cold and silent dead,
Than thus, the vulture Grief be fed
Hourly,—forever, on the heart!
Fore’er to pierce,—the poisoned dart!
Crushing all hope, and joy, and light,
In one long, hideous, frightful night
Of wild despair, and icy gloom!—
Better, by far, the silent tomb!

* * * * *

“What meaneth now this holy calm!—
 As though my soul were bathed in balm
 Of rarest bliss,—or Influence blest
 As foretaste of Celestial rest,—
 That soothing fears, allaying grief,
 Bears radiant Hope to my relief!
 List! strains angelic sweetly ring!—
 Soft in mine ear a voice doth sing,—
 ‘Calm now thy grief—cease every fear,
 The Angel bright of Peace draws near,—
 God will preserve thy Love and King,—
 God to thine arms will surely bring
 Thy conq’ring Hero safe again,
 Victorious, long with thee to reign!’”

* * * * *

Bright the train still wendeth way
 In the rising light of day,—
 Hopeful, Zillah’s glances rest
 On her Chieftain-hero blest;
 Martial music fills the air,
 Greeting ears of distant Fair,
 Waking songsters of the grove
 To their matin-hymns of love.

Winding thus they onward pass
Through fresh groves and heather grass;
Snowy plumes wave in the wind,—
Leon's banner, unconfined!
Glitter casque, and helm, and shield,
Gorget, falchion, "Argent field;"—
Farther, farther on they wend,—
Still their gleams of glory send
To the Loved,—till searching eye
Scarce may now the Brave descry,—
Fading, fading from the sight,
As the stars in clouds of night,
Waning, waning from the view
As the distance farther grew;—
Glitt'ring here and glimm'ring there,—
Now all lost,—again to glare
Bright in transient, fitful sheen,
As lightning flashes distant seen,—
And all is dark,—all passed away!
From lance, or shield,—no glimm'ring ray!

Thus fadeth Hope's sustaining beam
To mortals struggling on Life's way;—
Shines full her light with brilliant gleam
When first doth open human-day;—

But cares come gath'ring one by one,
And dark'ning shadows fall,
While fitful gleams Hope's cheering sun,
Till fade her fair beams all!
Crushing the light from anguished heart,—
Sad struggling,—tempest tossed,
Until Hope's silver-chain doth part,—
Storm-wrecked,—her anchor lost!
When sinketh down that soul to die!
“Turned face unto the wall!”
The weary frame o'er soon to lie
Beneath the sable pall!

The morning breeze comes freshly now,
Bearing rare odors from sweet bowers,
Bathing each brave and noble brow
With dew exhaled from opening flowers;
And with the sun, rise spirits bright,
Dispelling anxious fears of night;
And with the feathered choir, each heart
In joyous anthems carols part.
Lighter their steps, with sanguine hope,
To buoyant heart-throbs' cheerful beat,
That conq'ring warfare they shall cope—
Victorious, the Moslem meet!

Thus, with untiring speed, the band
Pursue their onward way
Through forest dense and vintage land,
Where plains extended lay
Purple with fragrant thyme and heath,
And lanes, gay hedged along
With sweet-brier rose in twining wreath,
Where oriole's warbling song
Wake feelings now of pensive mood,
While muse they on the fond,
The gentle, beautiful, and good,
Sad grieving far beyond ;
And many a heartfelt sigh is given,
And many a soul-fraught prayer—
That earthly ties may not be riven,
Kind Heaven still longer spare
Each to his loved, while life beams bright,
And hearts with love-pulse beat,—
That, victors, they return in might,—
The dear ones all to meet.

And many a purling brook they cross,
And many a merry stream,—
Pionia, rushing in her course,—
Ova, and Tua's gleam,

In trilling water's vocal chant,
Gay babbling, dancing on,
Till stays the deer in timorous pant
To list their lulling song,—
Laves bathingly his antlered head,
And quaffs the waters clear,
Starting, with wild affright and dread,
As armèd-men draw near,
To leap within the refuge dense,
That wild palmettos yield,
Where instinct and untutored sense
Doth teach, is guard and shield.

Now dark sierra's fading line,
Dim the horizon doth define,—
And near they Auria's hapless site,—
Auria, consumed in horrid night!—
After long leagues of weary way
Her ruins dark, before them lay;
And soon they reach the Minho's tide,
Whose rushing stream pours by the side
Of huge, grim, tott'ring tower and wall,
'Mid ashes,—as a funeral pall!
Standing as monument forlorn,
Telling of light and glory shorn,

Of peace, and love, and beauty fled,
Of hopes and joys, all withered—dead !
Dark pictures, to remain, of blight,
Where erst beamed naught but pure delight !

No more the dark-eyed Spanish maid
With pride entwineth raven-braid ;
No more sound notes of mandolin
To bounding steps, 'mid merry din ;—
No more the loving, happy stroll,
Where bulbul's strain doth liquid roll ;—
And joyous, blissful, whispered vow
'Neath vesper-star and citron-bough.
But drooping lid and pallid cheek,
Of aught but joy, or gladness speak,—
While sad upon the willow hung
The sweet guitar,—with chords unstrung !

Oh ! what a sad-wrought change is here !
No sign of well-trained vintage near,
Or goatherd wand'ring up the glen,—
No piping shepherd,—harvest men,—
But blight and desolation drear,
On every woful side appear !

No vegas brightly blooming seen,
No vineyards rich in purple sheen,

No golden fields, or perfumed bowers
Where love and joy beamed as their flowers !
But dark o'er thee, the bird of night,
Poor Auria ! spread his wing of blight !
His raven-wing, of horrid woe,—
In fearful swoop of Moorish foe !
Well hath the Moslem done his work,—
In every path his fiend-tracks lurk !
Behold ! the lone, neglected cot
Where joy once reigned ! ah ! sad the lot
Of her poor inmates, forced to flee
From the invader's miscreancy !
The father, ruthless murdered, fell !
The mother, fate more sad to tell,
Borne to the Caliph's mosque-capped hall !—
While those poor children, tender, small,—
Neglected, starving, drooping died !—
And this is all remains beside !

Look ! how the door stands open still,
Where all may enter at their will,
Or man, or beast—no sacred hearth
Where rang out tones of joy and mirth ;—
Those trellised vines now drooping fall,
Fair household gods, demolished all !

While mournfully the kiddings bleat,
In vain, loved, kindly hands to meet.

Ah ! sad the picture thus to scan !

Sad, sad to say that such is life !

Man preying on his brother-man,

As wild-beast, fierce for blood and strife,—

His earthly-temple, that should be

But dedicate to harmony

And virtues all perfected bright

That temple to illume with light,

Closed up to all of good and pure,—

But selfish end fain to secure,

E'en to the Field, with slaughter rife,—

The target—heart's-blood !—mortal life !

And this is loss, to each and all,—

E'en sad ones struggling on

Their weary round, while shadows fall

And hope and joy are gone.

For each, his course should fully run,—

And Heaven orders so,—

Man's mission here, perfected, done,

Unfolded full below,

Prepared to enter higher sphere,

Refined and purified,

From discipline and trials here,—
As gold through furnace tried.

And Nature would design that all
Should reach their full earth-hour,—
As perfect fruit doth ripened fall,
Or fair developed flower.
As those in Halls of Science vast,
Primary-schools first take,—
Through each gradation perfect passed,
True, full progression make.
This earth, sphere rudimental then,
Through which each soul should pass,
Perfecting for the second, when,
'Twill rise to proper class.

CANTO XV.

BUT how progress our Brave and Bold ?—
Still marching on, through forests old,—
By rivulet's tortuous way,
That from high mountain sources stray
Watering rich meadow's varied green,
And vineyards, purple-laden seen,
Refreshing earth, and sight, and taste,
Through forest, grove, and prairie waste ;
And now receding hills are seen
In fading tints of blue and green,
While rosy hues gleam in the west
As turns the gorgeous sun to rest ;
And length'ning shadows, sombre throw
Their dark'ning lines on crimson glow,
And burnished spears all fitful gleam
In flashing rays, 'mid sunset's beam.

Approach they soon fair Leon's plain,
Spread with her rich and golden grain,—
As some vast garden brightly rare
With groves, and bowers, and vineyards fair ;
Fig, olive, orange, citron greet
The sight, the sense, in perfumes sweet,
As from the land of Eden-Blest
To melt the soul in Heavenly rest !
Pomegranate, blushing crimson red
From out her leafy, em'rald bed ;
Tall trees of stately palm and pine,
Enwreathed with twining, blossomed vine,
And lofty oak, in royal pride,
Mimosa, cypress, date beside ;
Clothed all in verdure's richest hue,
As scene Elysian to the view—
Bathed in the sunset's glowing sheen,
Enchanted, all is beauteous seen !
While cool the fresh'ning evening breeze
Comes murmuring through the rustling trees,
And shades of eve fall gently round,
While silence rests o'er all profound ;—
And night, her mantle-folds of grey
O'er vega, hill, and grove doth lay.

All silent,—save the humming sound
Of locust from the heath around,
And opening notes of bulbul's strain,
That liquid ring throughout the plain,—
And measured tramp of chargers' feet
As on their way they pacing beat ;
And rushing sound of Esla's stream,
That full upon their sight doth beam ;
While brightly, in the fading skies,
The evening star doth calm arise,
And myriad orbs look forth, to see
The coming strife for Liberty !

And doubt ye, that fair *Angel-hosts*
Were wanting, at fond guarding-posts,
In prayerful watch to guide and bless
Their children of the wilderness ?
Or God Himself, to lead the way,
The invading, impious hand to stay,
And raise the Christian Cross again
To suffering souls of fallen Spain !

Through grove, and vale, and dell, and hill,
Advance the band, now firm and still ;
And as the night doth all embrace,
Quicker their steps draw on apace,

As towering toward the dark blue skies,
Lofty and fair in calm moon-light
Leon's cathedral doth arise !

Glitt'ring her towers, as silver bright !
And high in heavenly azure clear,
The glorious moon doth fair appear
Above her symbol, reared below
By infidel and impious foe.

Sleeps calm the city, all secure,—
Nor dreams of foe that dare may roam
Within her mighty walls so sure,
Or precincts of their guarded home !
Naught breaks the silence of the night,
Save, now and then, quick, startled flight
Of lark from lowly grassy nest,
Affrighted from his dewy rest.

With cautious tread they pass along,—
Checked word of jest, or light-hummed song ;
Onward they glide, with downward spear,
As closer, closer draw they near ;
For fain would they escape the eye
Of watchmen, ere the walls they nigh.
Once 'neath the broad, dark shade they throw,
The guard may ne'er ken friend from foe,—

The pass-ward given,—*All sure right,—*
Their host they'll deem, returned from fight,
Conq'rors from Christian mountain-fray,—
And freely ope the portal's way!

'*Twas thus! They neared the pond'rous wall*
Or ere the warder gave his call,—
And on the gate, 'neath shadowed wing,
A bold, sharp stroke doth clearly ring,—
When—" Quien vivè?" challenge came,—
And quick, in answer to the same,
The watch-word " Alla Akbar " rose,—
When oped the gates to Christian foes!

Now pass they through those portals grand,
The entire, bold, stalwart Spanish band,
'Neath shadows dense that still enclose,
Deceiving till emerged, when rose
A cry so loud and wild and fierce
From myriad voices, far to pierce
Remotest bounds with horrid fear!
Pealing as death-knell on the ear
Of dreaming Moor in sleep's repose!
Bursting as bomb, it wild arose!
" *God! Santiago!*" rings the cry,—
" *Vengeance! God's sword is raised on high!*"

Long, long bide we our harvest-day,
Vengeance, withheld, now has its sway!
Awake! arouse thee, Moor! and see
God's Hand, repaying, sweep o'er thee!

“Awake, O Moor! wake thou to see
The avenging sword now hang o'er thee!—
Lo! the Avenger! look! behold!
The crescent's fire is waning cold!—
Before our glorious Cross of Light
Sinketh thy moon, in sea of night!
Wild, raging waves of fury roll
Over the vile and impious soul!—
Lo! Leon's banner high in light!—
Her 'Argent field' spread crimson bright,—
Effulgent in Spain's glorious day!—
God the Avenger! now bears sway!”
Shouted Pelayo; “On! men, on!”
And dashing foremost, led the throng,—
Charging the astonished Mussulman,
Who 'wildered met the Asturian.

And e'en Orelia felt the power,
Magnetic, of the battle-hour!—
With fierce strung sinews, nostril spread,
Proudly, the furious war-steeds led!—

And well each knight played good-sword there
And brave Count Eudon bore his share,—
With zeal unknown, there hewing way,
Bold through the hottest of the fray,
Inspiring here, and charging there,—
For life naught seeming he to care !
So warm for country's glory now,
As though inspired by noble vow
To expiate his errors past
In brave absolvment full, the last,
Thus cancelling his true-mourned sins,—
Till glory bright he nobly wins !

“*Vengeance ! Pelayo !*” riseth high !—
The captive Spaniards list the cry !
When echoes back one joyous strain
From iron-bound doors, and bolt, and chain !
While the unmanacled, cell-free,
Wield madly swords, for liberty !
Till full the tide of victory rolls
O'er dark, invading tyrant souls !

From dungeon's dark cell, now each bolt they fierce
tear,
Riven quickly huge chains, and their captives all
free !

While in the wild conflict all bravely take share,
Christian pris'ners, o'er-joyful, in dear liberty!

Boldly fierce, their halberds play!—
Long they bide this glorious day
Pining in the lone, dank cell!—
Bravely! bravely, war-strokes tell
For their Cross and Native Land,
For the free, sweet breezes bland,
Playing freshly o'er the brow,
Fragrant from each citron bough!—
Oh! how sweetly to the Free
Comes the breath of Liberty!—
Freed from dungeons' midnight gloom,—
From a horrid, living tomb!
Freedom sweet,—and air,—and life!—
Glorious now the battle strife!
“Strike for Cross and Liberty!—
God be praised! we're free! we're free!”
Ardor fierce, fills hand and eye,
As all earth they may defy!
Inspiration fires the brave,
Cross and land to free and save!—
Wildly fierce the keen blades fell!—
Christians' shout to Techir yell!

“ *Santiago ! and our King !* ”

“ *Al il Allah !* ” piercing ring.

“ *Allah Akbar !* ” and “ *Alla il Alla !* ”

From Moslem,—wild Arab-lips fall—

“ *Santiago y clena España !* ”

Back rolleth the glad Christian call !

Clash of steel and clang of blade,—

Frenzied blows around them played !—

Peal of gong, and tocsin bell,

Mingling with the war-cry, fell,—

Till, dismayed, the Moors retreat !

Comrades falling at their feet,—

Hewn as grass on harvest-day,

Moslems, falling in the fray.

God is with His children now !—

God the impious neck doth bow !—

God doth raise the Holy Cross !

Christians shields from woe and loss !

Glory to the God on High

Who to suff’ring Spain draws nigh !

Glory to His Name e’er be !

Glory bright, Eternally !

Thus right and left, as scathed leaves, fell
The smitten sons of Ishmael ;
While, clear above the combat's sound,
“ *God ! Santiago !* ” riseth round.—
“ *Pelayo ! Spain ! and Vengeance !* ” loud,
Continuous rings from Christian crowd,
While “ *Allah illa Alla* ” yell,
Piercing upon the ear still fell ;—
And desperate the Moslem fought,
Dearly his life and freedom bought !
Right manfully their blows did tell,
With stroke for stroke, until they fell,—
Easy the vict'ry Christians reap,—
To Spain, the Moslem conquest cheap !
Surprised ! dismayed ! the frightened Moor
Can ill withstand the fierce blows sure
Of the prepared Asturian men,
Whose zeal inspired to frenzy, when
Home, tower, and altar meet their gaze !
Till death-stroke sure, each falchion sways.

Death havoc sweeps the 'wilderer foe
As mountaineers all rushing go
Scattering their ranks to quick retreat,—
Fall shield and buckler 'neath their feet

As fly the swarthy Arab band
Before the avengers of the land,—
Rushing on with blood-stained feet
Before Asturian followers fleet.

From out old Leon's rescued wall
O'er rock and hill the dying fall ;
While captives humbly lay them low
Their arms before the Spanish foe,—
“ *Amaun ! Amaun !* ” * to craven cry,
“ *Amaun !*—thy slave, or ere we die !
Quarter, pardon grant, we pray !
Eblis now hath gained the day ! ”

Well hath the Avenger hewn his way !
Rejoice, O Leon ! for thy day
Dawneth effulgent in new light,
And Spain ariseth from her night !—
Rejoice ! unfurl thy banner now !
Rejoice ! Auseva's heaven-kissed brow !
Cantabria ! mountains, hills, and streams !
Spain ! for thy splendor glorious beams !

Wakened the dawn from that wild night
Upon those walls on direful sight

* The craven cry, “ Quarter ! Pardon ! ”

To tender heart, or stricken Moor !
For lo ! the hand of Vengeance, sure
And true, had dealt the deadly blow,
That strewed her streets with slaughtered foe !
Dark turban'd forms, on every way
With lance and battle-weapons lay,
And cloven gorgets' severed head
All helmeted, lay with the dead !
And clefted cuirass, gory strown,
Whose spirit-tenants thence had flown !

Ay, fully now doth vengeance fall
Within our rescued Leon's wall ;
While from each court and turret ring,
The loud "*Real*"—"Hail to our King !
Viva Pelayo ! King of Spain !
Leon ! thy line restored again !
Raise we the 'Argent Banner' high,
While in the dust doth Crescent lie.
Deep stained our swords with darkened gore
Free by the impious Moslem shed,—
Thus to the dark Gehenna's shore
Vile sons of Eblis we have sped ! ”

And now the "*Alla hu Akbar*"
Of Moorish wailing riseth far ;

“Woe! woe is me! Great Prophet! God!
Sons of Mahomet, kiss the sod!
Woe! woe upon us and our race!
The Crescent to the Cross gives place!
Eblis, the Prince of Darkness, low
O’er Allah’s sons spreads wing of woe!”—
Soundeth far “*Wul Wullah*” * cry,
Woman’s wail, to pierce the sky!
Shrill “*Wul wullah*” dirges ring,
’Mid “Vivas! Hail our Leon-King!”
“*Alla hu Akbar! Ay de mi!*
Lo! unto Eblis fallen we!
Woe to the sons of Ishmael, woe!
Who kiss the dust ’neath Christian foe!”

“Viva Pelayo!” still the strain,—
“Long live Pelayo, King of Spain!”
Rising o’er the voice of woe,—
“Vict’ry, vengeance to the foe!”
Shouts each conq’ring Spanish son,—
“God hath now the vict’ry won!
Cross and Leon-banner high!
God our Father, smileth nigh!
Glory be to Him Above!
Heavenly King, supreme in love!

* Death song, or woman’s wail.

God, our land doth now restore !
Glory ! Peace ! forevermore ! ”

* * * * *

CANTO XVI.

Nor long the King delays return,—
For Zillah fair his soul doth yearn,—
To ease her gentle, anxious heart,
Of fears that pierce as poisoned dart,
And brighten eyes, dim with tear-dew,
Until their light return anew.
The morrow's dawn had scarcely smiled
And flow'rets from their sleep beguiled,—
The bulbul scarce had ceased her note,
Or lark had fluttered wing to float
With carol gay toward orb of light,
When plumèd Royal wing for flight,—
Pelayo brave, to seek his star,
'Mid clouds of grief and woe afar ;—
In joy toward *his* light to lead,
With glorious tidings, loving speed !

How fares it with the loved ones hence
In cloistered wall, where penitence
And fasting vigils fill the day
Of friars on their earthly way ?
Pace those lone halls, the grieving fair,
As angels fallen from Heaven there,
Sad mourning joys celestial bright,—
Departed rays of loving light !—
For wedded hearts thus sighing they,—
For knight, or liege-love, far away
In scene of combat's deadly strife
To peril all of dear in life ;
Thus weeping, as dew-laden flowers,
Thus drooping through long severed hours ;—
Nor marvel we, for holy love
Is like unto the joys above ;
And smileth God, on pure and bright
Who cherish His fair germ of light ;
For, ever dear to God Above,
Fraternal, filial, wedded love ;—
And ne'er would He one shadow throw
Upon love pure and deep below
Twixt kindred bosoms fond and true ;—
But ever doth well pleasèd view
The expanding of his own love-germ
To fullest growth,—nor e'er would term,

“*Idolatry*,” the ardent love
Whose tendrils turn not all Above,
If purely given here below,
Where He hath planted it to grow.

“*Idolatry!*” mistaken cant
Of darkened age, when scarce a gleam
Of God’s true love could shine aslant
Upon the soul with cheering beam,
To tell the dark, ascetic heart,
We should bestow in liberal part
Of love, which from His fount hath birth,
Upon our kindred-ones of earth;
And never check one ardent ray
That from that Central-source would play
Upon the dear-ones here on earth;—
For God is Love! He gave it birth—
And souls congenial, kind doth give
On which that germ may fondly live
Until transplanted to His Bowers,—
The fairest of all Eden flowers,
Where, ’mid His rays of loving light,
’Twill bloom in pure effulgence bright!
Within that glorious sphere above,
Where God is Heaven,—and Heaven—is Love.

As moans her mate pure widowed dove,
Sad Zillah mourns her absent love;
What now to her sweet myrtle bowers,
When sighs of fear fill up the hours!
What, all the wealth of blossoms sweet,
That bend beneath her weary feet!
What, joyous notes from green-wood trees,
Or perfumes borne on gentle breeze!
They breathe of one that hence hath fled,—
“Perchance now lying with the dead!”—
Thus sighs she e’er, with anguished tone,—
“Kind Heaven! ah! leave me not alone!
Alone! alone to grievous fate!
Alone! in anguish desolate!—
Protect from hapless widow’s lot,
Existing here,—yet living not!
With life-blood’s checked and heavy flow!—
Shrouded in gloom all earth below!
Have mercy, God! spare! spare such doom!—
A living death—in horror’s tomb!”

Again, again she lowly bends,
And oft again her soul-prayer sends
To Heavenly courts, that God will spare
Her Love and Liege from Azreal’s share.

“ Spare him ! oh ! spare him ! ” still her cry,
“ Save ! save him, Lord ! nor see him die !—
The lowliest peasant-maid I’d be,
To have my Love safe here with me ! ”

And rosary and earnest prayer,
Repeat full oft the maidens fair,
While friars, closed in grated cell,
Their orisons and psalter tell
For those who now seek peril dire,
Rousing the sleeping Moslem’s ire !—
Bearding fierce wolves within their wall
Where Moor or Christian sure must fall !—
“ God grant it be not Spanish knight,
The soul that parteth in the fight !
God grant, in bright victorious hour
Return Spain’s band ! her Pride and Flower ! ”

Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
They wander, sad and drearily ;
Or, ’mid their groves all grieving stray
Throughout the weary, anxious day,
Till vesper bell rings clear for prayer,
When, to the chapel turn the fair,
With holy fathers grave, to pray
For Braves exposed in conflict’s fray ;

Where rosaries again they tell
With troubled-hearts, full, anguished swell
For those all dearer far than life
Battling in warfare's deadly strife.

CANTO XVII.

Now at the faintest glimm'ring gray
Of early dawn's first beaming ray,
The King, and suite, with ardor fond,
Pass Leon's conquered walls beyond.
On all her ramparts proudly shone

Her Bannered Lion, Argent Field !
The Moorish pennon fallen,—gone,—

While Crescent's gleam to Cross doth yield !
High on Cathedral,—God be praised !
Toward Heaven the glitt'ring Cross now raised !
Waned, hath the Crescent's baleful fire
Beneath the Christians' vengeance dire !

Light the heart of our brave King !
Light with joy his soul doth sing !—
Bearing now returning way,
Victor glorious of the day,

On Love's wings, with tidings bright
To his Queen,—his heart's delight!—
Deeming leagues e'er longer grow,
Charger's pace ne'er half so slow!—
Fain would his fond, impatient mind
En-reinèd hold the morning-wind,
That so exceeds the swiftest speed
Of e'en Orelia,—noble steed!
And, borne upon its breezes sweet,
Swift fly unto his Zillah's feet!
Cheer her sad soul, breathe forth his love,
Dispel the anguish of his dove!

But only to the impatient king,
And lover-knights, on leaden-wing
Are they on fleetest steeds thus borne.—
As flitting birds at early morn
Wing forth when rosy beams first cheer,
From night of dark and stormy fear,
To sing to sweetest flow'rets bright
That day rebeams with glorious light,
So they, in truth, all rapid lead
Returning march of hasty speed;
And ere the grieving fair may ken,
Have reached the convent in the glen!

And quick dismounting, seek the dear
And loving ones, with happy cheer
To call them from the cloister's cell
Where mournfully their beads they tell,
To list the startled, joyous cry !
To mark the beaming of the eye !
To clasp the loved in fond caress
Of over-flowing happiness !—

But where our drooping Zillah then ?—

Not 'mid the sombre, stifled wall,
But far within the flowery glen
Hath wandered she apart from all ;
Beneath the pure, clear, twilight sky,
To offer ardent prayers on High,
Where last, beneath the myrtle's-leaf
She parted from her lover-chief.

Sweetly the moon looked forth and smiled
Upon that pure, earth-grieving child,
Praying for him,—her Love,—alone
Beneath God's high and starry throne !
Lowly, in humble prayer she bent,
While evening stars their pure rays sent,
To kiss her brow and bosom fair,
As on their beams to Heaven they bear

The earnest boon she thus did crave ;—
“ O God ! my liege-love, guarding, save !
And bear my Light of Life to me,
Safe ! safe, in bravest victory ! ”

Sighed she as evening breeze this prayer
That angels on their bright wings bear,
Wafting her soul-breathed thoughts Above
To One all merciful, in Love.
Her small clasped hands, in pure moonlight,
Lay on her bosom lily white,
Her violet eyes, soft tear-dewed shone,
Upraised unto His starry Throne !—
Shone she, as star or angel bright
As beameth in Celestial light,
With golden tresses on the wind,
As Heaven’s harp-strings unconfined !

Thus beamed she on Pelayo there !—

Who springing clasped her to his breast,
Exclaiming,—“ Heaven hath heard thy prayer !

Safe in these arms my bride doth rest !
My life ! my soul ! my star of light !
Safe, God *hath* borne me through the fight !
The conquest ours ! and Leon free !
Victorious Spain ! and I with thee !

My Queen of Love ! my heart ! and throne !

Oh ! what this moment without thee
To share my joy ! mine honor's own
With me,—in royal victory !

“ See ! at thy feet, Love, cast I low,
Banner first wrested from the foe
With mine own hand, hours briefly late,
From Leon's highest rampart gate !
Thus, thus mine every deed shall be
E'er dedicate to God and thee,
My star ! more precious far than throne !
Zillah ! my love ! my bride !—mine own ! ”

Oh, joy ! oh, bliss ! oh, wild delight !
She rests upon love's armored breast,
All gleaming in the clear moonlight,
Enfolded closely, warmly pressed
To heart o'er-flowing with its joy !
Its happiness without alloy !—
High, Cross and Banner proud of Spain !—
United, safe, the loved again !

“ Oh ! Heavenly dream !—too bright to last !—
Safe ! safe, and here ! all danger past !
My soul's-light safe, and Leon free !
Safe ! and to Spain the victory ! ”





There fond enlinked in chain of love,
They breathe their grateful praise above,
To Him from whom all blessings spring,
The Great, the Universal King!

Sudden her beaming brow she raised—
“Now God, my love,” she cried, “be praised!
Kneel, kneel with me ’neath heaven’s ray,
My life! our grateful love to pay!”
And there, where anguished prayer her last
Had scarcely unto Heaven passed,
Upon the flow’ring mossy sod,
Before the Great, All Seeing God,
Whose moon-beams fair of liquid light
Illumed their brows with glory bright,
One arm encircling his pure bride,
One hand enclasped—thus side by side
There fond enlinked in chain of love,
They breathe their grateful praise Above,
To Him from whom all blessings spring,
The Great, the Universal King!
Who guarded through the battle-fray!
Who brought to Spain victorious day!
Who saved his Cross from impious hand!
Who spared the Christian mountain-band!
Who, safe again fond souls unite
In pure, ecstatic joy’s delight,
Forevermore to dwell in love
Until they soar to realms above!
Love, that shall ever freshly well
From holiest founts’ unfathomed cell,

Through earth, to fair Celestial skies,
All brighter there, to glowing rise !

Now sounds the monastery's bell
Te Deum-Chant all souls to swell,—
And to the Hermitage they wend,
United, grateful praise to blend—
With happy hearts, so bright with glee
Earth seems one scene of witchery !
And joyous maidens love-spells cast
O'er valiant knights, life-long to last ;—
For sudden change from grief to joy
Dispelleth now all frowning coy,
With which, in scenes of former ease,
The Fair, as tyrants, erst would tease,—
But thus surprised, by joy so sure,
They 'wildered yield, as vanquished Moor,—
And conquered smile in silken chain,
To soul-tuned notes of Love's refrain.

Now thus ere yet the feast is spread,
Pelayo, with his Zillah, led
To chapel, convent-halls along,
The gath'ring, joyful Christian throng,
While round the olden altar there
Entwined and draped with bay-leaves, fair,

Flowers, laurel-wreaths from green-wood glen,
Stand Prelates, Friars, Holy-men ;
Urban, Centerio, loved of all,
Mitred, in purple robes that fall
Richly o'er those most rev'rent forms
That faithful proved through darkest storms.

Before the Altar, Queen and King,—
While perfumed censers o'er them swing ;
And low the royal Pair now bend,
While incense sweet with prayers ascend ;
And all assembled, kneeling bow
In offered praise, and prayerful vow
To worthy prove of blessings all
That now to each, and country fall.
Loud rings throughout monastic wall
“ *Laudamus* ” grand, from one and all,—
Joy-gushing notes, full, clear, and free,
In grateful praise for Victory !
Sounds 'mid these solemn walls ne'er heard
From aught save Nature's happy bird,
That unrestrained its song will roll
Of merry glee, without control.

Thus blithe, our God would have all men,—
From palace to monastic glen ;

Life, with its joys, He giveth free
For all to quaff in purity.
Away, then, with the fear of frown !
From Heaven God smileth kindly down !
Look up ! and bask in His Love-beam,—
In pure, good works, your souls redeem
From gloomy, superstitious night ;
Illume your mortal temples bright
With love, and peace, and charity ;
And weave you wreaths of purity,
To grace the portals of the soul,
Whence stony rocks of darkness roll.
And light its dome with rays of love,
That God may enter from Above.

CANTO XVIII.

BRIGHT blushes the dawning o'er glen and o'er dale,
Bright sparkles the dew-drop in blossoming vale,
Bright smileth the Orient's grey breaking skies,
Precursor of splendor and glory, to rise.
Alive is the convent, and merry, and gay,
Astir are they all, and must soon hie away,
And hurry, and bustle, and speed all around
Ere first matin-bell doth her summons resound.
When Joy lights the taper, and Hope gilds the ray
Of life's flitting moments, hearts ope with the day
To quaff full the nectar of earth's loveliness,
Nor calmly may rest in their pure joys' excess.
E'en Friars are jovial, and Fathers are gay !
For Joy's merry tide now may none seek to stay ;
From the smiling of morn to the sunset all bright,
From the fair Star of Eve to the dawning of light,

Earth, air, and high-heaven with radiance glow,
While joy through each bosom doth gushingly flow ;
And bright eyes are dancing in merry delight,
And brave hearts succumbing to Cupid, the wight ;
For when War furls her banner, strings Eros his
 bow,
And to waning of Mars, riseth Love's rosy glow,
Raising clear in mirage of the mind's vista
 bright,
Fairest visions of *myrtle* and *orange-buds white*,—
The pure Bridal wreath, and the Altar, and Vow,
In closer perspective all happily now !

Each matin is over, each breviary said,
And soon from the convent each being hath sped,
Maid, knight, monk, and prelate all hither away,
For none may be laggard from Leon's great day !
When Pelayo, in diadem regal is crowned,
Oh ! where is the Christian could absent be found !

And mounted, and ready, the chivalrous host,
All joyous and eager—each one at his post,—
On Orelia, foremost, Pelayo is borne
Beside his loved Zillah, as star of the morn,
Now radiant beaming all bright in her love,
As rich eastern sky rosy blushing above ;

Around them brave knights and our "Liege-ladyes"
fair,

Who gay in the dawning's rejoicings full share ;
While Alphonse by our Queen, as young page bearing part,

With the boy-germ of warrior swelling his heart ;
Count Eudon, Theodmir, Pelistes, quite near,
Don Pedro, and nobles, in right goodly cheer !
While fair flowers of beauty, and infantine glee,
Crown the cortége with brightness and joy merrily !
Ad'ladis* and heralds haste far in advance,

In gay-decked apparel, with bay-rod and lance,—
And love knots are smiling on breast-plates, I ween,
Of "*Faire Ladye favoures*" 'mid bright burnished
sheen ;

And glorious pennons are streaming on high
To the fresh morning breeze, toward the azure flecked
sky !

Before the King the Cross is raised,
That, legends tell, (all Saints be praised !)
Was borne from Heaven by angels bright
To Christians on Auseva's height.
Of this, I may not vouch to say,
As chanced it not within my day—

* Guidesmen.

But only tell, how foremost there
Was borne that golden symbol rare !

Floateth now the banner wide
Over King and Royal bride ;
“ *Lion rampant, crimson bright* ”—
“ *Argent Field* ” in folds of light ;
Warriors round them, tried of old,
Saviours of each precious fold,—
Bravest knights, of valor known,
Victors, 'neath its wavings shown,—
Stalwart soldiers, followers all,
Ever firm for Country's call ;
Flower of noble Christian band,—
Bone and sinew of the land !

List ! the bugle peal on high !
Clarion, trumpets, ringing cry !—
“ Ready ! Forward ! ” sounds the call—
Onward ! King, and suite, and all ;
Till from Convent-court hath passed,
Knight, and Priest, and Brave the last.

Vict'ry's tones ring full on high !
Martial music rends the sky ;
Earth, and air, and groves around,
Joyous with the inspiring sound !—

Trill the wild-wood choir in glee,
Rival strains of minstrelsy !—
Marvel must they now, I ween,
At those battle-weapons keen,
As the lightning's glances seen
Flashing through the branches green !—
Trumpet-notes, full, joyous swell,
Breaking stillness of the dell ;
Drowning sound of streamlet's play,
Hum of murmuring breezes' sway,
With their tones, that peal aloud—
Victory glorious ! Victory proud !—
List ! the strains all softer grow,
Blending with the waters' flow,—
Liquid harmony doth float
With the breeze and wild-wood note,—
Earth, and air, and zephyrs free,
Chant in chorus—" *Victory!* "

All gayly in that morning's pride
Pace "Ladies-brighte" their knights beside ;
While gently doth Pelayo guide
The palfrey white of his loved bride.
Thus joyfully they wend their way
As splendor fills the opening day.—

Imbued, each object sparkling bright,
With glory's beams of breaking light
Stealing sweet dew from waking flowers
Bespangled with night's pearly showers,
While oft from branch and drooping tree
Their diamond drops fall bounteously
On noble brow and Parian neck ;
With sparkling gems the fair to deck,
Who venture 'neath their twining play
In merry morning breezes' sway.

And groves and bowers their path lay through,
Artistic arches to the view,
Enlaced by spreading branches sweet,
That playfully the trav'lers greet
With floral showers from creeping vine
That fondly clinging there entwine,
Fragrant with night's refreshing balm
To steep the sense in gentle calm,
As falling 'neath the passing feet,
Their incense rises pure to greet
The beautiful, the brave, and good,
Through blooming vale and forest-wood ;—
And thus, as wend they there along,
Cease clarion shrill and cymbal notes,

While rises full in anthem's song,
Glad chorus that through ether floats.
Oh ! glorious that anthem's swell,
That grateful souls thus upward well
In harmony's rich tones of love,
To Him, their Father, God Above !

As morning radiance shineth now
In valley deep,—o'er mountain brow,—
So shineth *Truth* deep in each soul,
With full conviction's firm control,
Clear, on her mountain-tops of light,
That *Love* shall rule the future bright,
As plain, God's golden scroll doth ope
Wider and clearer to the scope
Of mortal, comprehensive mind,
Bursting the chains that error bind,
To read in glorious letters bright,—
Rend, rend the clouds of darkened night !
Behold the brilliant morn arise
Of *Loving-Power*, in bright'ning skies !
Behold the blessings, far and wide
That God bestows on every side,
Beaming with rays of love alone
That radiate from His pure Throne,

Till full, from Heavenly realms above,
The blessed sunshine of *His Love*
Entereth the windows of the soul,
To bright illume and cheer the whole !

Soon, vega, hamlet, vale and bower,
Are clearly seen in dawning hour,
As broad departing shadows fade
From night's repose on dewy glade,
And morning breaketh, full and wide,
In all the rich and glowing pride
Of Spain's transparent azure clime,—
Waking sweet orange-buds and lime,
To breathe from out rich freighted trees
Their incense to the passing breeze,—
Bathing each brow of beauty there
In zephyrs pure of morning air ;
While rolling tides of melody,
In constant, richest minstrelsy
From Nature's choir pour concord's strain,
In matin chant of rare refrain.

Serene each heart with joyful hope,
As yonder meadow's blooming slope,
Whose buds of opening beauty sweet
Spring freshly bright their steps to greet,—

For happy now, the hearts they bear,
Secure, in tranquil rest !
Of homeless wand'rings, past their share,—
The future, brightly blest !
Thus earth around and bright'ning sky
Shine fair with rosy gleam,
The Dove of Peace close drawing nigh—
Spain, bright in glory's beam !

The lark expressed her rapture high,
Soaring afar toward azure sky ;
All things of earth, in beauty glad !
No lowering clouds of darkness sad !
Ay, all of gloom and mourning, past,—
Fading, in splendor's ray—
As morning breaks, through shadows vast,
In gorgeous opening day.

Fair their path, where buds of night,
Fragrant cistus' leaflets white
Fall in silv'ry floral sheen
Over mossy beds of green,
Wafting precious odors round,
Rich distilled from dewy ground ;
Thus, all crushed 'neath passing tread,
Is their richest sweetness shed ;

As the spirit's brightest power
Oft is shown in heaviest hour—
Tried in sorrow's darkest night,—
Virtues, sleeping in the light,
Bringing out in hour of woe,
As the diamond-beam to glow.

'Twould weary, were I more to tell,
How all that long and joyous day,
They journey over hill and dell,
Until the golden sunset lay
Serenely cradled in the west,
When yet another convent blest,
Invites the weary to repose,
At twilight's gentle, balmy close ;
Or, of a second morning bright,
Arising from a peaceful night,—
When, all refreshed, with eastern ray,
Again the band pursue their way.

All blithe, fresh, and merry as birds on their flight,
To regions of paradise beauteously bright,
Each heart bounding lightly, while gayly Hope sings,
And Fancy is revelling far on Love's wings.
Oh ! drink ye of Nature, fair souls, while ye may,
Quaff freely her nectar as happy ye stray,

For soon will the wild rose and sylvan-bower
green,

Be parted for pageant, and court-life, I ween!

Then quaff the dewed-chalice, embrace the sweet
breeze

From mountain-tops borne on the high swaying
trees,

Meet the zephyrs that play round the cheek and the
brow

As the lover receiveth the kiss and the vow!

From Nature's bright fount, ye all freely may sip—

Ne'er fear that too joyous, or deeply ye dip,—

Her beauties, her loveliness, never may cloy,—

Her pleasures all pure without shade of alloy.

In fond, gentle converse pass lovers along,—

Gay spirits are happy in tale, jest, and song;

While the mind, whose Interior openeth to Light,

Thrills rapture to exquisite scenes of delight

In glorious Nature, at morn, noon, and eve!—

While Fancy, inspired, a bright halo doth weave,

To lift to Elysian-dream-life the mind

That revels in joys to which others are blind.

Flow'rets sweet their pathway line,

Eglantine, and wild-rose vine;

Streams of golden, sparkling play
Brightly deck their smiling way ;—
Wend they gayly, happ'ly on,
Gentle, priestly, warrior throng,
Bold cortége in glitt'ring mass
Onward to their Leon pass ;
Till the sun, now risen high,
Gloweth in meridian sky,—
When behold the happy crowd
Leon's Cross in freedom proud !
Rising in the distance far
As some glory-beaming star !
'Bove cathedral's peerless height,
Smiling in her glory bright !
Mosque and tower in sunny skies,
Glitt'ring also, boldly rise,
Distant still,—no murm'ring hum
Of the city, yet may come
Rude to break the calmness there
Of those scenes remote from care,
Turmoil, pride, and envy's strife
Filling up the courtier's life.

Naught is heard save flowing tide,
Esla's stream in ripp'ling play,

Laving in her gentle glide
Palm and hazel-skirted way.
Winding on, their course doth lay
Still by Esla's devious way,
Near the chestnut forest-side
That fair Leon's ramparts hide
From her children as they roam
Eager toward their rescued home !

CANTO XIX.

HAPPY, joyous ones are they
On their brightly varied way !
Blithe as merry wild-birds free,
Chanting matin melody,
Now emerge they from the shade
Of the forest, through the glade,
When unfolds to raptured view
Leon, rich in glowing hue
Of victorious glory's pride !
Banners spread to sunbeams wide,
Myriad crosses glitt'ring bright,
Cheering e'er the Christian sight,—
Fair, luxuriant "*Patios*" green,
Decking all the sunny scene,
Wafting odors rich and free,
As the breeze of Araby !

Grand, her "walls of octagon!"—
Brazen gates, eleven, shone!
Cross high raised with banners all,
Where "*Muezzin*" late did call
At the glowing sunset fair,—
"Alla hu! to prayer! to prayer!"
Gone Muezzin! crescent! foe!
To Gehenna's shades of woe!
Risen, Cross and Banner high;—
God, in mercy, hath drawn nigh!
God doth smile upon His band!
God doth raise His cherished land!

"Hail! hail to our Leon!" now fondly they cry,
"Hail! hail! to our Cross in the bright heavens
high,
The vile, baleful crescent in darkness doth lay!—
O Moslem-invader! well bided our day!
Then Leon, dear Leon! dare none to defy!
Our hearts are her bulwarks! defending we die!
Ne'er foothold again on her soil shall have ye;
Our Leon, regained,—is forevermore free!"

Ay, fair doth Leon greet their sight!
Fair, her towers and mosques arise

In re-illumined glory bright
 'Mid the smiling azure skies ;
Fair her cathedral's dual towers,
Where the moon no longer lowers ;
Set, hath she for e'er in night,
'Neath the Cross in glory bright.

How looms that Cross in noon-tide glow,
Telling of scattered, vanquished foe !
Of crescent, sunk in sea of gore
Beneath those towers—to rise no more !
Risen, Christ's symbol high again !

 Waned crescent 'neath her holy light !
Risen as Phœnix, happy Spain !

 From ashes of a direful night.
Then God be praised ! who guardeth all,
To lift the suffering in their fall ;—
Who saith :—" My hand I will not stay,—
Vengeance is mine ! I will repay ! "

With re-inspired and freshened speed,
 "*Ad'ladis*" now advance,
With herald, borne on snowy steed
 In eager, hast'ning prance ;
And cavaliers, their banners decked
 With bay and olive crown,

And lettered praise in laurel flecked,
As pendants floating down ;
While close appear the victor King,
The fair and beauteous Queen—
Surrounded by a noble ring
Of knights in armored-sheen.

And, as the city gates they near,
Behold ! approaching now
A vast procession doth appear !
Troops, priests of holy vow,—
The City Council and her guard,
In raiment richly grand,
With welcome strains from lyre and bard,
To greet the Christian band ;
While in advance gay heralds bear,
On salver's golden-plate,
The city-keys in offering there,—
Keys of each tower and gate.

Now, halting, they awaiting stand,
As near the Regal train—
The flower of all the Christian land—
The valiant sons of Spain !
When bursts one wild and deaf'ning shout—
One full, tumultuous cheer,

To ring all far and wide about,
In loving "Viva!" clear.
Presented are the city-keys,
Seized now Pelayo's shield—
Borne from his steed, with gentle ease,
O'erpowered, he fain must yield!
And placed upon his buckler bold,
That guard of breast most pure,
They high aloft their monarch hold,
With loving-hands and sure!
While beareth he in upraised hand,
The Golden Cross so bright,
The Sacred Cross, the Angel band
Bore to Auseva's height!

High on his shield they bear him now,
Upraised above the crowd!
Erect his form—upturned his brow—
While acclamations loud,
With wild "*Real*" and "Three times three—"
"Hail! Viva! Leon's King!
Pelayo! Hail! and Victory!"
From earth to Heaven ring!—
*Till spirits of the brave Above,
The martyred, ruthless slain,*

*Gaze down, with smiling, deathless love,
Upon rejoicing Spain !
Waving Celestial banners white,
Unseen,—of Peace and Purity,
O'er Spain's brave King, in glory bright,
With Cross upraised in Victory !*

Oh ! what a spirit-stirring sight !
Thus borne that Hero brave !
Who, bold in all of good and right,
Doth Cross and Kingdom save,—
Majestic, standing thus above,
In loving subjects' hold,—
Swaying all hearts with ardent love,
For valor, pure and bold.

And tenderly the Queen they bear
From off her palfrey white,
When in a Regal, "*Golden Chayre*"
They place their "*Star of light ;*"
A pearl wrought, golden "*Chayre Estate*"
That quaintly, of devices rare,
Palanquin, litter, doth partake,
And Royal throne in share ;
A fairy "*Carosia*" bright,
Of gold and precious stone,

That glitt'ring clear in rays of light,
All sparkling, dazzling shone ;—
And bars of gold, and arms of pearl
Support her lovely frame,
While gem-wrought pennons bright unfurl,
To shine with her loved name,—
In diamond words,—“ *Hail, Zillah, Queen* ”
In rubies rich,—“ *Of Love !* ”
In sapphires' pure Asteria sheen,—
“ *Bright as Morn's Star above !* ”
And Rod'rick's “ Royal Cloth of Gold,”
Draped fair that car around,
Where “ marv'lous pearls ” on every fold,
Rare stones were subtly bound.

By Acolytes, from Altar's side,
Now borne our beauteous Queen !—
By warriors, borne in loving pride,
Pelayo still is seen !

With arching neck, and stately tread,
Orelia is honored led,—
His trappings hung with laurels bright,
For faithful service through each fight,—
And well, in sooth, he seemed to know
Their victory o'er the Moslem foe !





And as advance the cavalcade,—
The gorgeous regal train,
All space with one consent is made
To ring—"Hail! King of Spain!"

With nostril spread, dilated eye,
Erected mane,—proud prancing by.

Now fair their way, sweet blossom-strown
By maidens robed in white,
Till as some fairy scene all shone,
Or vision of the night !
In sooth, a dream-like, radiant scene,
As e'er beamed vision bright ;
And true, as fair, shines all, I ween,
In victory's glorious light !

And as advance the cavalcade,—
The gorgeous Regal train,
All space with one consent is made
To ring—" *Hail ! King of Spain !* "
From every height wild " Vivas " pour,
And happy faces beam
As morning-waves on ocean's shore,
In joyous, sparkling gleam.
And " Hail Pelayo ! Hail our King ! "
" Hail ! Queen of beauty fair ! "
In echoing strains of welcome ring,
In joy's ecstatic share !

And still before them blossoms strown,—
While from above, in showers,

Are laurel and oak-chaplets thrown,
With wreaths of choicest flowers.
Towers and verandas, sumptuous draped
With richest cloth of gold,
Where gems, in loving mottoes shaped,
Shone glist'ning o'er each fold,
Of—" *Welcome! to our King and Queen!*
Hail! to the Royal Pair!"
Fond, studded words of jewelled sheen,
Wall, tower, and banner bear.

While far perspective arches seen,
Of sweetest, fairest flowers,
Entwined with bay and olive green,
In vistas of rare bowers.
All blossom-lettered, welcome-fraught,
Breathing and speaking love,
For him who hath their freedom wrought,
And her, his mountain-dove.
And deaf'ning acclamations rise,
And bells by hundreds ring,—
Sound trumpet, clarion, viva cries,
With—" *Hail Pelayo! King!*"
While deep the great cathedral bell
Tolls forth her welcome-peal,

Her gratitude, full loud to tell,
For Cross and Country's weal,
Where bright that symbol high in air,
Now gleaming, points above,
Toward realms Celestial, smiling fair,
Where reigneth God in Love.

On stalwart shoulders rests the shield,
Where stands Pelayo brave,
While "Lion gules on Argent field,"
High o'er his brow now wave;
Erect he stands,—the Cross of gold
High bearing in his hand,—
The Cross that to Auseva bold,
Was borne by Angel-band!
Draped thick his shield, with laurel leaves,
With chaplets of green-bay,—
Each leaf of bravery that breathes,
To deck the Conq'ror's way.

Oh! proudly on the King her gaze
Fair Zillah rests in joy!—
Turned now their path from sorrow's maze,
Smiles Peace, without alloy!
Ay, fondly turneth oft the eye,
Upon her noble love,

Her Victor-Liege, on buckler high,

Borne thus in pride above

The retinue and happy mass,

The rushing, swaying throng,

That crowding, check the onward pass

Of Christian-band along.

And worthy he of fondest gaze—

That perfect one to view !

That noble brow, where rich hair plays

In waves of raven hue ;

Of fullest height, majestic form—

A God-like, perfect man !

With virtues pure, and feelings warm

As e'er through bosom ran.

His soul-illuminated orbs of light

Beaming o'er subjects all,—

Oft and anon with deep delight

Upon his love to fall.

In beauty sweetly beaming,

Zillah, his mountain-flower,

As star of morning gleaming

E'er through his troublous hour,—

Till cheering sun now shining

Dispelleth darksome cloud,—

And glory's wreaths are twining
Where flowers ensanguined shroud
The urn of martyred Hero,
The ashes of the Brave,
Whose blood flowed as the billow,
Their falling land to save !

How beautiful she beameth there !
How lovely in her pride !
Pride all for him, nor self hath share,
Nor aught but him beside.
O wedded-love ! O holy bliss !
When hearts true-joinèd are,—
What brighter joy on earth than this !
With this, what may compare !
Her azure eyes with love are bright,
Moist with the grateful tear,
As violets bathed in liquid light
Of dew-drops shining clear.
Back from her brow her tresses float
As sunny rays of light,
Or golden strings for heavenly note,
Or haloed glory bright ;—
Her lovely form oft graceful sways,
In courtesy to bend,—

All lovingly each wreath to raise—
Acceptance gracious lend ;—
But tiny hands may never bear
The wealth of falling sweet,
Or Parian arms, the burthen fair,
That, showering, constant greet.

Passes the King majestic on
Through densely pressing crowd,
With kind acknowledgments along,
To Welcomes, fond and loud ;
And still repeated loving glance
On her, his Star of love,
Whose presence doth his joy enhance,
As sunlight from above !
Beams fond that full and soul-lit eye,
As quick the thought doth rise—
Ah ! what all this were she not nigh,
Light of my soul and eyes !

Toward the Cathedral vast and grand,
The train slow moves along ;
For scarce may pass the Royal band,
So press the mighty throng.
And up her marble steps they pour,
The swaying, eager mass,

Till vaulted arches wild'ring roar,
As storm-winds in their pass,
With human voices entering now,—
From Priests, who solemn raise
“*Te Deum's*” chant, and grateful vow,—
“*Laudamus*,” full in praise.
Swellleth the loud and sacred song
To vaulted roof above,
That, echoing back, its tones prolong,
Of over-flowing love.

Borne still the King on burnished shield,
The Queen on brilliant throne,
While 'bove them, floating “*Argent field*”
Where Golden Cross still shone ;—
And ever near, Alphonse the child,
His Mistress dear, to wait,—
Beside the Royal Ladye mild
On golden “*Chayre Estate*,”—
To bear the train in fingers small,
To wave the perfumed fan ;
As Cupid fair amid them all,—
The blossom of the Van.

Now up the long, dim aisles they pass,
The royal suite and train,

Knights, warriors, and assembled mass,—
Brave, glorious souls of Spain !
And on they move in glitt'ring line,
With holy-banner high,
Toward chancel, where in silver shrine
St. Isidore doth lie,—
On John the Baptist's Altar there,
Enshrined,—“ In peace to rest,”
That holy corse in sacred care,—
St. Isidore the Blest !
Up to that gorgeous Altar's base,
The sanctuary's pale,
Where flow'rets white, pure interlace
Each golden step and rail ;
Where massive, gold “ Custodia ”
Doth Sacred Host enclose,
Resting on richly silvered car
Near Holy Saints' repose ;
Where reverent wait the priestly crowd
In scapular and stole,
To God and holy office vowed
In record's sacred roll,
With mitred abbot, bishop grave
In purple vesture's sheen,
Awaiting there the Fair and Brave—
Spain's Royal King and Queen.

Thus grave before that Altar now
The regal suite all stand,—
Before the Heavenly Lord to bow,—
King, Queen, and knightly band ;
And censers sway their rich perfume
In dreamy incense far,
And fragrant rods of spice illume
Each niche, as gleaming star ;
And lofty tapers' waxen light
Beams high through chancel clear,
Where vestal-nuns in virgin white,
Through oriel grates appear,—
As Angels, who through bars of Heaven,
Her sunny rays, glance down
On mortals from earth-sins unshriven,—
Unworthy yet the crown ;
And softened rays o'er paintings rare,
Of holy martyrs past,
And sculptured saints in marble there,
A haloed radiance cast ;
And angels 'mid those naves appear,
And heroes bravely bold,
Beaming in earthly beauty clear,
As aught e'er seen or told !
And she, the Star ! the light of all !
And he, Spain's glory bright !

Since Eden's hapless sin and fall,
 Ne'er beamed so fair a sight !
As falling high rose-windows through,
 Rich, mellow sunbeams now,
In glorious rays of rainbow hue,
 Play o'er each royal brow :
And fragrant torches' fitful light,
 And lamps that odors breathe,
As blaze of noon-tide dazzling bright,
 Majestic domes enwreath.

'Mid loud hosanna's swelling peal,
 They bend before the shrine,—
While praises rise for Country's weal
 From Lay, Brave, and Divine.
A strange, impressive sight that scene !
 That vast cathedral grand,
Whose body, aisles, and altars teem
 With priests, mass, warrior-band ;
The mail-clad heroes brave of Spain,
 Whose tow'ring plumes and weapons bright,
Strange contrast form to priestly train
 Of solemn monks enrolled in white.

The stately suite all rev'rent now
Before the Altar humbly bow,

Of John the Baptist, pure and good,
With all the Holy Brotherhood ;
When slow, from silver shrine doth rise
 The veil off sainted Isidore !
Revealing to the royal eyes
 A crystal case, that bore
His holy corse, embalmèd there,
 To solemn, awful view,—
As marble statue lying fair,
 Seen clear that crystal through !
And thus, in earnest prayer they bend,—
 Here, ardent vows of love
And gratitude, united send,
 With praise to Heaven above.

Arrayed in sumptuous purple-folds,
 With minor priests, in train,
Centerio, high, advancing, holds
 The banner bright of Spain,
With holy-banner there aloft,
 Bearing our Saviour's name,—
That late, vile infidels so scoffed,
 And trampled low in shame !
Now, spread above the Royal head,
 Now, floating free on high,—

To victory and freedom wed,—
 Raised broad toward Heaven's sky!—
Above the kneeling monarch there
 He waves the banner proud,
Bestowing every blessing's share,
 While "Amen" cry the crowd;
The Holy Cross doth solemn sign,
 Chanting his earnest prayer,
Till Urban, blest and loved Divine!
 Approaches gravely there—
With "Cross of Gold" o'er royal brow,
 He, fond eulogiums proud
Pronounces on the monarch now,
 In loving tones and loud;—
And Coronation rites are said,—
 Proclaimed Pelayo, King!
The rubied crown on royal head!
 While myriad voices ring
With joyful acclamations all,
 In heartfelt tones of love,
From nave to tower in rise and fall,
 To mighty domes above!

High, solemn mass now chant they all,
 And earnest prayers are said

For heroed souls, who brave did fall,—
The Requiem for the Dead.

Two swords now Urban hands the King,
Whose metal, erst full clear did ring
From valiant wield of Rod'rick's hand,
Striking for Faith and cherished Land ;
“ *Colado*,” and “ *Tizona* ” yclept—
That he, “ *El Cid* ” untarnished kept
E'er, till their last, bright, swaying gleam
On Xeres, by Quad'lete's stream !
Flashing, as parting spirit's glow,
In life-blood's faint, expiring flow,
With effort's last collected force,
Ere severed from the sinking corse,—
As wasting candles' fading light,
Startling, in gleaming flashes bright,
Of brilliant flaming ray the last—
Ere darkness over all is cast !

“ *Colado's* ” hilt, a cross, whereon
Upon one side was graven seen—
“ *Si, Si*,”—while on the other shone—
“ *No, No*,”—in gold and silver sheen.
And on “ *Tizona*,” written were—
“ *Avé Maria, Gratia* ”—

“ *Plena Dominus*, ”—all bright,
In jewels glitt’ring to the sight !

And on his breast the cross is placed,
That oft with “ *Cid* ” brave battle faced,
Gleaming, ’mid armed ranks afar,
As through wild night some brilliant star ;
Formed of four equal, silver parts,
Covered with gold, and set with stone,—
As “ artichoke ” to rise its heart,
That white and green enamelled shone,—
While on one side engraved it bore,
All clearly,—“ *Crucis Salvator* ” * *
Where “ *Sante Petre* ” * * and “ *Porto* ”
In jewels pure, did lustrous glow.

Again the lofty aisles loud ring
With anthems from grand choirs,
That joyful hallelujahs sing,
In tones that love inspires ;
And “ *Gloria in Excelsis* ” notes
All souls united sing,
And “ *Benedictus Deo* ” floats,
And “ *Jubilate’s* ” ring
Through Gothic aisles—up lofty towers,
In joyous chorus’ swell,

As offer incense, sun-kissed flowers,
Their gratitude to tell
For radiant beams from Mercy's throne,
For sunny rays of light,—
Leon, restored unto her own!
Leon in glory bright!

Now, 'mid the mighty rolling peal
Of harmony's full swell,
O'er King and Queen, who lowly kneel,
The blessing fond doth well
Full from Archbishop Urban's voice,
With raised arms, outspread,—
O'er Royal ones, the "Hail! rejoice!
God's blessing on thee shed!"

*"Benedicat vos,
Omnipotens Deus,
Pater et Filius,
Et Spiritus Sanctus,
Amen."*

And sacred rites performèd are,
The Coronation o'er,—
Aloft again the Royal Pair
Borne 'mid triumphant roar

Of loud hosanna's rolling tone,
Through wide-spread, crowded aisles,
Where myriad faces beaming shone,
Enwreathed in joyous smiles. •

And as they near the portals grand,
So press the rushing mass,
Scarce now may move, the Regal band,
Ad'ladis force their pass,—
For joy has reached perfected height,
And wild the clamor now,—
All must behold their Queen of Light,—
All gaze on Regal brow !
And as they pass those portals out,
Bursts forth the pentecost
Of human joys' full, ringing shout
To echo far and wide !
While soundeth clarion, clear and shrill,
The shalm and trumpet-peal,
With tambour's clang, and psaltry's trill
Loud for the Christians' weal !

Onward they pass o'er flower-strown way,
Where founts of jasper bright,
Through allegoric figures play
Of Parian marble white ;

The trees of elm and willow nigh,
 Blooming with soul-lit flowers
Of human faces, beaming high
 Amid their leafy bowers.

Thus slowly move the courtly band,
 Patio and Place along,
St. Isidorè's structure grand,
 'Mid cheers, and Vict'ry's song !
Through vistas green of bay-arched bowers
 Our Royal Pair repass,
Still radiantly enwreathed with flowers,
 Showered from the loving mass ;—
While, with their quickened, soul-oped eyes,
That pierce the blue ethereal skies,
 Blest seers behold, high waving now
 Celestial palms o'er royal brow !
 By pure, angelic, heroed hands
 Of martyred spirits ! sainted bands !
 The Angel guardians of Spain !
 Who chant seraphic, glorious strain,
As moves the King 'mid loud acclaim
 That joyous mortals cheering raise,—
Thus perfect crowned his glorious fame
 With sainted pæan ! Heav'nly praise !

CANTO XX.

THUS passeth now our King of Spain
To Leon's palace grand,—
O'er loving subjects calm to reign,
Peace smiling on their land ;—
O'er Oviedo's kingdom blest,
O'er Leon, long to reign,
In blissful happiness, where rest
The Christians brave of Spain ;—
Where brightly glows Love's rosy-wing,
And soundeth sweet guitar
To gay bolero's bounding spring,
While joy-notes ring afar ;—
And thus, in happiness content,
In pure and virtuous life,
From mountain-wand'rings, homeless spent,
They rest from care and strife ;—
'Mid sparkling founts, and mimic grove
Of sweetest, rarest flowers,

As on Auseva's mount to rove,—
To pass still joyous hours ;—
Where perfumed censers waft, of gold,
To music's witching sway,
Gay wander forms of beauteous mould,
That strayed by Deva's way.

But, 'mid their halls and "*Patios*" bright,
None ever cease to love
Their mountain-caves of marble white,
Fair Deva's vale above ;—
And still their summer-court must hold
By clear Pionia bright,
'Bove Covadonga's fastness bold,
In sylvan joys delight ;—
While many a knight and fair, I ween,
Bless e'er Auseva's height,
Where Cupid swayed his arrow keen,
With Mars, his sabre bright ;—
For there, fond, truthful vows were said,
Warm hearts exchanged in love,
To join, in happy marriage wed,
In bonds blest from Above.

And all that Coronation night
The city-bells did ring,—

The live-long night, in wild delight
Gay subjects dance and sing!—
Bolero, seguidille, and song,
Guitar and zel gay sound
Each “*Patio*” and bower along,
With mirthful voices round;—
While, as one blaze of glowing fire,
The city glory beams
From balcony to highest spire,
From lamps of colored gleams;—
Rise signal-fires from hills above,
To tell empyrean skies,
How bright with joy their land of love
As Phœnix now doth rise!—
God’s sons have won their heritage!
While rises o’er the land
The Cross-capped tower and hermitage,
‘Cathedral, convent grand!—
And all the Regal Court is gay,
Joy beams as sun-light round,—
Joy brightens all in Glory’s ray,—
No darkness may be found!

And knighted now is Gomez there,
With heroes nobly brave,
Who well have borne full boldest share,
Their Cross and Land to save;—

And might we weave full many a tale,
Of noble knight, and fair,—
Of lovers, in sweet Deva's vale,
If idle time to spare,—
And how all happy wedded were,—
Gomez and Inez too,—
Of lovers fond, 'mid wand'rings there,
Who faithful bore them through.

And how a tiny blossom rare,
Bloomed for Pelayo's bliss,—
Type of her angel mother fair,
His Zillah's loveliness ;—
How yet a son, to him and Spain,
Favila bearing name,
Arose, as blessing, still again,
To fill love's hallowed flame.

How Ormasinde, his bud of light,
To young Alphonse he gave,
In maiden beauty freshly bright,
As bride for valor brave ;—
Might sing we of their joyous life,—
Pelayo's,—Zillah's fair,—
In peaceful bliss, from battle-strife,
Of perfect love to share ;—

And how Pelayo reignèd long
Oviedo's, Leon's king !
Their kingdoms vocal with love's song,
That joyous subjects sing !

No more of sorrow's-night and woe,—
No more 'neath yoke of swarthy foe,—
But reign they o'er a land of light,
With Love to guide their sceptre bright.
Love reigns through court, and bower, and hall,
Love is the monarch over all ;
And peace, and happiness, and joy,
Fill hearts and land, free from alloy.
Joy sparkles e'er throughout the court,
Peace smiles o'er cot and vale,
While mandolin and merry-sport
Resound through bower and dale ;
And tinkling sound of light guitar
Arises with the evening star,
When happy couples, joyous met,
Keep time to merry castanet ;—
And tales of ardent love are told
Beneath the chestnut-branches old,
And vows are breathed of tenderness,
As seal of promised happiness ;
And all is joy, and all is love,
From earth below to Heaven above,—

Each one contented with his lot,—
And Spain, of lands, the Eden-spot!
Whence Lucifer and minions cast,—
The Foe and all of darkness past,—
While Heaven's smiles, full over all,
In Glory's radiance brightly fall!

Ay, through the land the Cross doth rise
In gleaming triumph toward the skies!
While crescent's form no more is seen,
Save in the skies at starry e'en;
And bright all convent-halls again
With daughters beauteous of Spain,
Who now may bend to God on High,
Nor prostrate fall at Imaun's cry.

And scarce a league from Xeres' plain,
That erst brave Christian-blood did stain,
Where Guadalete's winding stream
Doth through her valley sparkling gleam,
A Monastery, bold doth rise,
In stately grandeur, toward the skies,
Before the "Hills," where Roderick fell,
As monument, his fate to tell.
A trellised path-way, rich with grapes,
Shaded from sunbeam, entrance makes

Unto her grounds, there teeming fair
With pomegranate, and fruitage rare,
Vineyards, and groves of fig and lime,
All blessings Heaven gives that clime.
Near Mèdina-Sidonia's rise,
This "*Cartuja*"* thus calmly lies,—
Backed by Sierra's lofty lands,
The Carthusian convent stands,—
Imposing in its magnitude,—
Whose walls and turrets, distant viewed,
Seem rather town, or palace grand,
Than home of grave anchòrite band;—
But such it is,—and discipline
Beyond all known, is here within.
This *Cartuja's* huge, sombre wall
Hangs o'er each monk as funeral pall,—
From worldly ties, its joys and care,
There closing sternly, and for e'er,—
Their fixed, unalterable doom,
Immured within that mighty tomb.
No intercourse, no speech have they,
But vigils keep by night and day,—
And solitary, fasting pray,
Thus on their silent, Heavenly-way!—
Their wealth relieving poverty,
And all of care and misery;—

* Monastery.

The weight of age—the orphan youth—
Cheering, and teaching words of truth—
Through bounty kind :—the curtained-world,
Back to their vision ne'er unfurled.
The simplest food, their only fare,
Through grated doors receive they there,—
Coarse flannel robes,—rude beds of straw,—
And—stern, unpleasurable law—
No monk the labor e'en may save
Of digging for himself his grave,
Wherein doth fall his mortal whole,
When seeks his spirit brighter goal.

I'd tell how when years nineteen passed
Of blissful, glorious reign,
That Royal form, in death at last,
With pomp was sadly lain
In Saint Eulalia's regal tomb
At Valencia old,—
To rest within her vaulted gloom,
Our King of Leon, bold ;—
How, they do say, that when his soul
From mortal thrall took flight
Unto the spirit's blessed goal
Of endless joys delight,
That all empyrean Heavens rang
With sweet celestial strain

From Angel hosts, who fondly sang
One Welcome, glad refrain!
Through ether clear the chorus floats,
Till space is filled with joyous notes
Of praise unto the Just and Brave—
The righteous one, who Cross doth save
From infidel, blasphemous foe,
That fain would lay Christ's symbol low!—
And these the holy words, all clear,
From Angels borne to mortal ear!

*“Ecce quomodo tollitur Justus,
Et nemo considerat ablatus,
Et à facie iniquitatis
Et erit in Pace memoria eius.”*

Behold! how the Just our Lord taketh to-day,
And no man considers *why* taken away!—
From Iniquity's face doth he soar to the Blest!
While in Peace shall his memory evermore rest!

Of Spain's deep grief, still speak we might,—
And of her smiles again
When crowned Pelayo's bud of light,—
His daughter fair, to reign,—
When Ormasinde as queen arose,
With Alphonse, to the throne;—

And how, as History still shows,
And to the world is known,
Favila, to Oviedo's court,
King, second, did succeed,—
How sad he fell in hunting-sport,
To write is little need ;—
For this, each ancient tome will tell,—
Each vellum, parchment-scroll,—
Of "Happy Reign,"—and what befell
Until all reached the Goal.

But of their *present* who may speak ?
Where dwells each Royal soul ?
Who now may Regal-diary keep,—
Unfurl the *Spirit-scroll* ?

If deeds of Worth, and acts of Love,
If Purity of heart,
Be estimate in worlds Above,
Weighed in the Heavenly mart,—
As nobleness of mind and soul,
And Charity, and Truth,
Illumed their mortal lives the whole,
Methinks, that in good sooth,
Our Brave, and Beautiful, and Pure,
Together dwell fore'er,—

That love like theirs must still endure
Through endless ages there.

And we will deem them roving now
'Mid Heavenly bowers of Light,
Fairer than grace Asturia's brow—
Auseva's mountain-height,
With all their loved,—the Pure and True,—
The Blest of ages past!
Where, if *our* work we faithful do,
We, yet, may dwell at last!

AND this, my passing, random thought,
In words of simple rhyme,—
For grief, as solace, only wrought,—
To soften grievous time!
And, pray you, all good readers dear,
Scan with a kindly eye
My birdling, fledged in trembling fear—
Ne'er thinking far to fly;—
Sad woven rhymes,—in days of gloom
Strung but to stay the tear!—
In dream-life to illume my tomb,
Of buried joys—so drear!



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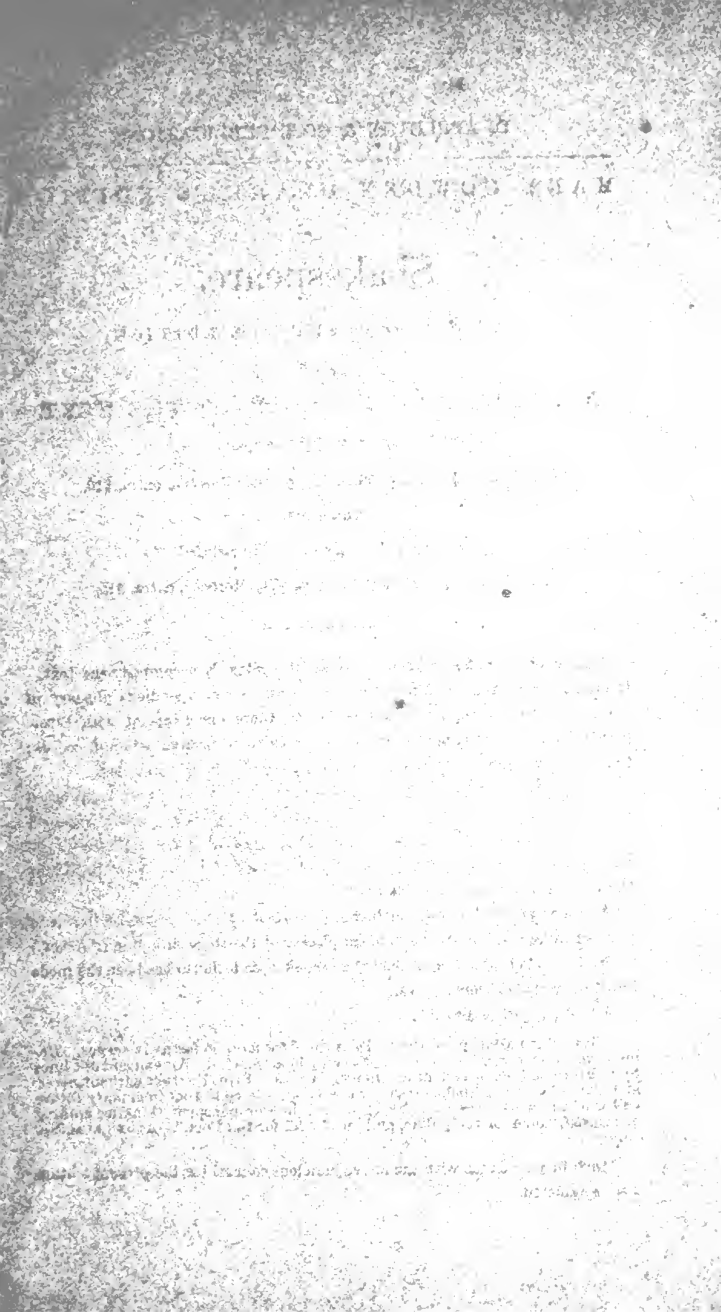
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